

NEW
LOOK

NEW: ANDY ROUSE
WILDLIFE COLUMN

AP EXPLAINS HOW TILT
AND SHIFT LENSES WORK

amateur

Saturday 13 March 2010

photographer

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PORTRAITURE

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OFF-CAMERA FLASH
Brett Harkness Masterclass



EXPERT TIPS

PAGE 27

**SHOOTING WITH
A SINGLE COLOUR**
Lee Frost shows you how



INSPIRATION

PAGE 30

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Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

I CAN never decide between, 'A change is as good as a rest', and, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' – two oft-quoted wisdoms that seem, on certain levels at least, to think in contrary directions. Last time we asked the opinion of our readers in a survey you told us that, on balance, you liked AP just the way it is. Some prefer one part of the magazine and ignore another, while others relish and pass over in the opposite fashion – effectively cancelling each other out. But while you seem in the most part to be happy with what we present to you each week, that is no reason not to make some changes – so we have. The largest part of this 'refresh' comes down to a few new colours and new ways of

displaying our articles. But we have also introduced some exciting new people: wildlife photographer Andy Rouse will be recounting his exploits for us every week, while expert photographers Brett Harkness, Paul Hobson and Lee Frost have joined Clive Nichols on our Masterclass team. We will still be catering firmly for the tastes of the more sophisticated enthusiast, with advanced techniques and thoughtful features, but without leaving the beginners behind. I hope you like it.



Damien Demolder
Editor

THE AP READERS' POLL

IN AP 27 FEBRUARY WE ASKED...

Is it right for the BJP to turn into a monthly magazine?



YOU ANSWERED...

A Yes	29%
B No	15%
C Don't care	56%

THIS WEEK WE ASK...

What is your first impression of the new-style AP?

VOTE ONLINE www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

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This latest version of Apple's photo-cataloguing and raw-editing software adds over 200 new features, but can it really compete with Lightroom? Richard Sibley investigates



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With 200 new features, will Apple's latest software be able to compete with Lightroom?

HOW TO HAVE YOUR PICTURES PUBLISHED IN GALLERY Send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. Visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/apgallery for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.

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APNews

News | Analysis | Comment | PhotoDiary 13/3/10

“Closer inspection of the dummy camera reveals that the lens throat is completely smooth, with no bayonet...”

New Sony lens mount, page 7



Micro Four Thirds future spelled out • AP interview prompts outcry

E-SYSTEM ‘MIRRORLESS’

EXCLUSIVE

THE Olympus E-System of Four Thirds cameras is likely to be completely mirrorless in two years time, according to a DSLR product manager at Olympus USA.

Speaking exclusively to AP at the PMA convention in Anaheim, United States, Olympus's Richard S Pelkowski explained that the electronic technology in the company's Micro Four Thirds Pen cameras has already surpassed the viewing methods of traditional DSLR models, and that there seems to be no reason to maintain mirrors, ground glass screens, prisms and viewfinder lenses in even the traditionally styled E-System SLR cameras.

'I would say that within 24 months the E-System will not have a mirror box at all,' Pelkowski said in an interview with AP Editor Damien Demolder and technical editor Angela Nicholson.

'Up until we launched the Pen cameras, all manufacturers were doing was fitting a digital sensor in what is ultimately a film camera body – there was nothing different. But with digital and electronic technology we can make cameras so much smaller.'

Removing the optical viewing path from an E-System DSLR would not only allow Olympus to make size and weight savings, but



Olympus USA's Richard S Pelkowski suggested that the firm's E-System cameras would have no mirror box within two years

would also make it easier to include HD movie functionality.

With the traditional dual curtain shutter removed as well, Pelkowski said that a fully electronic shutter could be introduced that would make extremely high frame rates such as 20fps possible.

'Soon the AF system in the Pen cameras will be as fast as that in the E-System DSLRs, so it will be possible to get just as good AF performance without the mirror system.'

While explaining that the image quality of the Pen E-P2 is just as good as that of the E-3,

Pelkowski moved to reassure AP readers that the full Four Thirds system would continue to exist.

'We have a great range of lenses for the Four Thirds system, and they're not going anywhere, but they will be used on smaller and lighter, more modern bodies.'

Pelkowski's comments created some confusion over whether his expectations accurately reflect the future direction of the E-System.

However, Pelkowski had in no way suggested that the company's E-System of Four Thirds cameras will cease.

● See page 6 for a full statement from Olympus, issued after AP's interview

LATEST NEWS ONLINE

amateurphotographer.co.uk

Interchangeable-lens APS-C-format model due SONY UNCOVERS CONCEPT CAMERA

SONY revealed a concept version of a new APS-C-format interchangeable-lens compact camera at the PMA show in Anaheim, USA.

The Alpha camera, as yet unnamed, features a new Exmor APS HD CMOS sensor and will provide full AVCHD (1080p) video capability.

There are few details available yet but Masashi Imamura, Sony's president of

Personal Imaging and Sound Business Group, said the system would be designed with the compact camera upgrader in mind. The company showed illustrations of a range of zoom and fixed-focal-length lenses, including pancake-style optics.

The model on show had no viewfinder, but others presented in a promo video did.

The cameras seem to have few body controls, suggesting that touch screens will



be used to access menu features.

The system will be launched this year, according to Sony.

SNAP SHOTS

● Life could be about to get easier for photographers who wear glasses, with the introduction of PhotoFrames from Hoodman. The titanium spectacle frames have a hinge at the top of each lens to allow the glass to be lifted out of the way when a camera is held to the eye. Each lens moves independently, so the frames are suitable for right- or left-eye shooters. PhotoFrames are supplied with plain glass templates in place to provide a guide for opticians who can install the correct prescription lenses for the photographer.

● Sony has confirmed there will be an enthusiast-level successor to the Alpha 700. No launch date or specification has been revealed, apart from the fact that AVCHD video recording will be possible. A concept version went on display at the PMA show in Anaheim, USA.



Do you have a story?

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A week of photographic opportunity

PHOTODIARY

Wednesday 10 March

EXHIBITION Weegee – a 'major exhibition' by the renowned photographer, until 5 June at Profile Gallery, Cleveland TS12 1EG. Tel: 07903 548 554. Visit www.profilegallery.co.uk.

EXHIBITION Shaped by War: Photographs by Don McCullin, until 13 June at Imperial War Museum North, Manchester M17 1TZ. Tel: 0161 836 4000. Visit www.iwm.org.uk.

Thursday 11 March

EXHIBITION Gavin Bond: Music, until 21 March at Idea Generation Gallery, London E2 7JB. Tel: 0207 749 6854. Visit www.ideageneration.co.uk.

EXHIBITION Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2010, until 18 April at The Photographers' Gallery, London W1F 7LW. Tel: 0845 262 1618. Visit www.photonet.org.uk.



Friday 12 March

EXHIBITION Little London by Toby Allen, until 8 April at The Brockley Mess, London SE4 2QZ. Visit www.littlelondonphotos.com.

EXHIBITION African Fever: Performing Africa in Europe by photographer Jessica Kendall, until 27 March at Brunei Gallery/SOAS, London WC1H 0XG. Tel: 0207 637 2388. Visit www.soas.ac.uk/gallery.

Saturday 13 March

EXHIBITION Simon Roberts: We English, until 5 September at National Media Museum, West Yorkshire BD1 1NQ. Tel: 0870 701 0200. Visit www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk.

EXHIBITION by Malick Sidibé, until 1 April at the Lichfield Studios, London W10 6NE. Tel: 0208 969 6161.



Sunday 14 March

EXHIBITION Rob Munro, until 31 March at Rhubarb & Custard Photo Gallery, Berkshire SL4 6AS. Tel: 01753 676 404. Visit www.rhubarbandcustard.biz.

EXHIBITION Rock 'n' Roll Animals by Sophie Jarry, until 21 March at Proud Camden, London NW1 8AH. Tel: 0207 482 3867. Visit www.proud.co.uk.

Monday 15 March

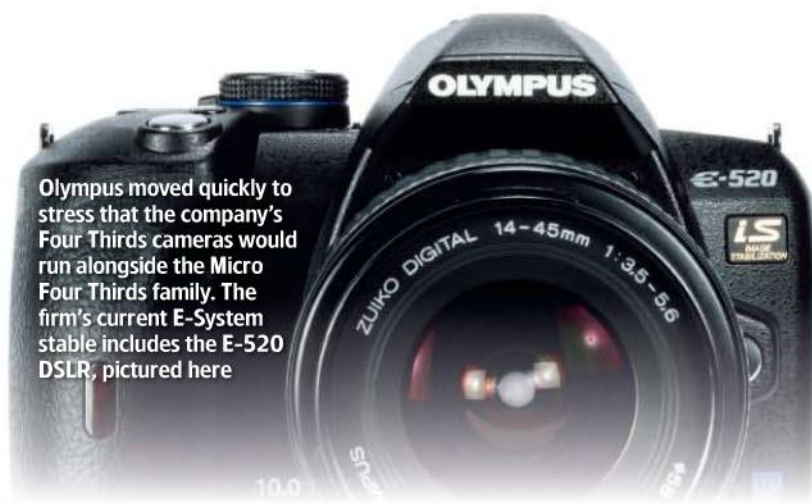
EXHIBITION Irving Penn Small Trades, until 24 April at Hamiltons, London W1K 2EU. Tel: 0207 499 9493. Visit www.hamiltonsgallery.com.

EXHIBITION Robbie Cooper: Immersion, until 5 September at National Media Museum, West Yorkshire BD1 1NQ. Tel: 0870 701 0200. Visit www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk.

Tuesday 16 March **LATEST AP ON SALE**

EXHIBITION Steve Macleod: Blackwater, until 24 April at Atlas Gallery, London W1U 7NF. Tel: 0207 224 4192. Visit www.atlasgallery.com.

EXHIBITION Paris je t'aime: Photography by Ivan Massar, until 28 March at Proud Chelsea, London SW1 5XP. Tel: 0207 349 0822. Visit www.proud.co.uk.



Olympus moved quickly to stress that the company's Four Thirds cameras would run alongside the Micro Four Thirds family. The firm's current E-System stable includes the E-520 DSLR, pictured here

E-System revelation sparks storm

OLYMPUS BOSSES REACT TO AP INTERVIEW

OLYMPUS issued an official statement to confirm that it will continue to produce Four Thirds cameras alongside its new Micro Four Thirds range.

The statement came within hours of AP's interview with Olympus USA DSLR product manager Richard S Pelkowski, in which he predicted that the company's E-System Four Thirds cameras would not be using a mirror viewfinder system in two years time.

In AP's report (page 5), Pelkowski had already made clear that the E-System Four Thirds range would continue even should the mirror viewfinder system be replaced.

But Olympus was concerned Pelkowski's comments – which first appeared on AP's website – might be misinterpreted.

The official statement is attributed to John Knauer, product manager for Olympus's USA DSLR business. It doesn't mention whether what Mr Pelkowski said truly reflects the future direction of the Olympus Four Thirds system.

It clarifies once more, though, that Olympus will continue to produce both Four Thirds and Micro Four Thirds cameras. Whether both systems will be using mirrors in two years time is not addressed.

Olympus is clearly still committed to the Four Thirds DSLR standard and will continue to develop it in tandem with its Micro Four Thirds mirrorless cameras.



OFFICIAL STATEMENT

'We still plan to develop full-size DSLRs and both, side by side,' said John Knauer, product manager for Olympus's USA DSLR business.

'The Pen range addresses different needs,' he added. 'With the E-P1 and E-P2 we were selling to existing DSLR users, but with the launch of the E-PL1, we're expanding that to a group of people who feel disenfranchised. We found about 20% of digital camera buyers wanted better image quality but didn't want the size and weight of a traditional DSLR.'

His comments are backed by a statement from Olympus Japan in response to suggestions that both systems might move to a mirrorless design: 'While [mirrorless Four Thirds] is possible from a technology standpoint, Olympus is committed to both the Four Thirds and Micro Four Thirds standards. In the future, you will continue to see new cameras based on both standards.'

Knauer also talked about upcoming lenses for Micro Four Thirds: 'The new 9-18mm and 14-150mm lenses both include internal focus, which is faster and quieter than on the existing 14-42mm, which will help overcome the concerns people had early on about focus speed.'

However, Knauer did not think the company would rush to replace the relatively recent 14-42mm kit lens to provide that same faster focusing for everyday shooting: 'At the moment it's more about filling gaps in the lens range than replacing the existing ones.'

SNAP SHOTS

● Samsung has shown the adapter it will use to allow its GX series of lenses, and others that use the Pentax K mount, to be fitted onto the new NX-system cameras. The adapter, which will cost approximately £99, has no electrical connections and thus will not transfer aperture or focusing information between lens and body. There will be no in-body aperture control, but a mechanical iris lever in the adapter will provide the means to manually close apertures down by eight steps from the widest setting. Initially Samsung had told us that the aperture would have its own iris, but it seems this information came about through a mistake in translation from the Korean engineer.

● Sony has launched its first underwater Cyber-shot digital camera, the TX5. Due out in March, the camera is said to be waterproof to a depth of three metres, drop proof from a height of 1.5m, and functional as low as -10°C. It is fitted with a 10.2-million-pixel Exmor R CMOS sensor and a 25mm wideangle zoom. At the time of writing no UK pricing had been set.



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Snap-on lens mount exposed AP SPOTS 'NEW' SONY LENS MOUNT

AT SONY'S press launch of its concept for an APS-C-format interchangeable-lens compact camera, AP noticed that Masashi Imamura, Sony's president of Personal Imaging and Sound Business Group, simply snapped the lens on and off the camera's body.

Closer inspection of the dummy camera revealed that the lens throat is completely smooth, with no bayonet and

lens barrels have no markings to show which way up they should be mounted.

It is possible that the mount may be magnetic, which would make lens mounting and removal easier for the novice users the camera is aimed at.

Sony representatives would not confirm whether the simple lens mount will be a feature of the new camera or if it is merely a feature of the dummy model.

Firm commits to GXR system

RICOH REVEALS NEW LENS/SENSOR UNITS

RICOH has moved to reassure GXR system users of its commitment to developing the system by announcing the planned introduction of a further two lens/sensor units for 2010.

Kazunobu Saiki (pictured), the general manager for Ricoh's European camera business, revealed details of an APS-C unit and a compact camera-style unit that will expand the company's range to four.

Due out in the summer will be the P10 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 VC unit that will include a compact sensor with a resolution of ten million pixels. The CMOS sensor will be back-illuminated, as with the unit used in the new CX3 camera. This should reduce the impact of noise in low-light situations.

A GR Lens A12 28mm f/2.5 optic is due for launch in winter 2010 and will be fitted with a 12-million-pixel, APS-C-sized CMOS sensor.



Ricoh said this lens will have a manual focus ring as well as an AF system, and will be powered by Ricoh's GR Engine III.

Ricoh plans to launch at least two new lens units a year.

Saiki-san also outlined plans for a range of accessories, including concept ideas for items such as a projector unit, a printer and a file storage unit.

A sensor-only unit is also being investigated that will allow users of third-party lenses to attach them to the GXR body.

Sigma lens blitz includes 8-16mm zoom for APS-C-format DSLRs

SIGMA UNVEILS SHORTEST-FOCAL-LENGTH ZOOM

SIGMA has introduced its shortest-focal-length zoom lens for digital SLR cameras to date in the form of the 8-16mm f/4.5-5.6 DC HSM (pictured).

Designed for use on APS-C-format cameras, the lens is intended to deliver the equivalent of a 12-24mm optic in 35mm format and has a wideangle view of 121.2°.

The 8-16mm f/4.5-5.6 DC HSM features elements made from Sigma's new FLD ('F' Low Dispersion) glass for reduced dispersion and aberration correction.

It has 15 elements in 11 groups with four FLD elements, one hybrid aspherical lens and two glass-moulded elements that aim to correct for distortion and astigmatism.

With minimum focus of 24cm, the 8-16mm optic measures 75x105.7mm and weighs 545g.

Sigma has also introduced the 17-50mm f/2.8 EX DC OS HSM, a stabilised lens for APS-C-format cameras with a standard-zoom focal length equivalent to 25.5-75mm.

Sigma claims the Optical Stabilizer extends the safe handholdable shutter

speed by up to 4 stops.

The lens is constructed from 17 elements in 13 groups, with two FLD glass elements, plus two glass elements and one hybrid aspherical lens.

It has a minimum focusing distance of 28cm and dimensions of 83.5x91.8mm.

Also new is an 85mm f/1.4 EX DG HSM lens, which is suitable for use on both full-frame and APS-C-format DSLRs.

This focal length should prove ideal for portrait photographers on either format, while the wide maximum aperture provides extensive control over depth of field. The lens has a rear focus system designed to reduce aberrations variation bought about by focusing.

It measures 84.7x87.6mm and features 11 elements in 8 groups, with one SLD (Special Low Dispersion) glass element and one glass moulded element.



Sigma has also updated its 50-500mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM and 70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM, introducing an Optical Stabilizer system.

The 50-500mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM has 22 elements in 16 groups with four SLD (Special Low Dispersion) glass elements for chromatic aberration correction, while the 70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM has 22 elements in 17 groups, with two FLD glass elements and three SLD elements.

The 50-500mm lens measures 104.4x219mm and weighs 1,970g, and the 70-200mm is 86.4x197.6mm, with weight yet to be announced.

All the lenses feature Sigma's HSM Hyper Sonic Motor, which is designed to deliver quieter, faster AF along with full-time manual focus capability, while Super Multi-Layer Coatings reduce flare and ghosting.

AP
THIS
WEEK
IN...

1919

The Carbine, a famous camera from W Butcher & Sons, was the focus of a full-page advertisement in AP's issue dated 12

March 1919. 'It's just that extra thought in design and the extra care during manufacture that marks the Carbine as pre-eminently the roll film camera for the man who knows the true meaning of the word "Best",' claimed the firm, based at Farringdon Avenue, London EC4. Beside the picture, a caption declared: 'Made in our works - the largest camera factory in the UK.'



SNAP SHOTS

● Fujifilm has bolstered its compact camera line-up with the introduction of a new 'long zoom' category. The 14.1-million-pixel FinePix JZ500 (priced £179.99) and 12.1MP JZ300 (£169.99) sport a lens designed to deliver the 35mm viewing angle equivalent of a 28-280mm zoom. They are due in shops early this month. Fuji is also set to debut four 'metal'-bodied compacts in the shape of the 14MP FinePix JV150 (£119.99) and JX250 (price to be confirmed), and 12MP JV100 (£99.99) and JX200 (£119.99). The JV cameras feature 37-111mm [35mm equivalent] lenses, while the JX cameras boast a 5x zoom.

● This month sees the debut of a 14.1-million-pixel compact sporting a 3.5in PureColor II Touch LCD screen from Canon called the Ixus 210. Features include a 5x optical zoom with a 24mm focal length at the wide end, in 35mm viewing angle terms. The £349 newcomer also features an HD movie (720-pixel) movie mode, Digic 4 image processor and a 'wink self-timer', designed to activate the shutter when a wink of an eye is detected. It also incorporates Eye-Fi memory card compatibility.

Police launch investigation

AMATEUR IN 'DELETE YOUR PICTURES' TERROR STOP

AP RIGHTS WATCH

Committed to defending your photographic rights!

POLICE have launched an investigation after an amateur photographer was stopped on suspicion of being a terrorist while out 'buying fish and chips'.

Stephen Russell stood his ground when police demanded he delete pictures he had taken of a police officer attending a minor incident in Kidlington, Oxfordshire. The officer had been called after a gang had hurled a bottle at a passer-by.

Russell, 59, said he had taken the photos because it was 'unusual' to see such police activity in the village. He told the *Oxford Mail* that the officer told him to delete the four images he had captured. But the photographer refused, telling the officer it was not illegal to take such photographs.

Russell was then subjected to a police search under Section 43 of the Terrorism Act. By law,

police should only stop and search a person under Section 43 if they 'reasonably suspect' the person to be a terrorist. 'He used the Terrorism Act to search me. I'm not a terrorist,' said Russell, who was then told to supply his personal details.

In December, police forces nationwide were warned that photographers are not legally required to provide their personal details when stopped under anti-terrorism laws.

A letter, issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers, reminded police chiefs that it is not a criminal offence to take photographs in a public place. Although members of the public are not legally obliged to give an officer personal details during a 'stop and search' or 'stop and account', there are growing fears that refusal heightens any suspicions an officer already has over a photographer.

Thames Valley Police confirmed that it has launched an investigation into the incident.



PINHOLE PHOTOGRAPHERS CELEBRATE 10TH BIRTHDAY

THOUSANDS of photographers are expected to celebrate World Pinhole Day, which is due to take place on Sunday 25 April.

Organisers have invited people to take a photograph using a simple pinhole camera and upload the resulting images to www.pinholeday.org.

'The purpose of the event is to show that from a device as simple as a cardboard box you can discover the wonder achieved through the simple act of capturing an image through a small hole,' said Justin Quinnell, a World Pinhole Day spokesman.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the event. Last year 3,202 pinhole camera enthusiasts took part.

For further details visit www.pinholeday.org.

CLUBNEWS

Club news from around the country

BEYOND GROUP

The Beyond Group, comprising 15 East Anglian photographers, is staging an exhibition of members' prints until 30 May at the Octagon Gallery, 27 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex CO1 1TG. Visit www.beyondgroup.info.

SALTBURN PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The society is hosting an exhibition of prints and digital images until 25 April at Kirkleatham Museum Pavilion, Redcar, Teesside (open Tuesday-Sunday 10am-4pm). Visit www.saltburnphotographicsociety.co.uk.

GREAT NOTLEY PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

The club is holding an exhibition of members' prints from 7 April-4 May at Braintree Library Gallery, Fairfield Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 3YL. It will include photos from the club's 'monthly themes' and images from excursions. Visit www.gnpsc.co.uk.

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APReview

The latest photography books, exhibitions and websites. By Jeff Meyer

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BOOK

Retro

By Neal Reed, self-published via Blurb, paperback, 120 pages, £25.
To order, visit www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/850817

Amateur Photographer
★★★★★

WHEN he took up photography a couple of years ago, AP reader Neal Reed also happened to become drawn into the UK's thriving rockabilly, hot rod and drag racing scenes. As he travelled the country attending more and more events, he began taking pictures of the races, the characters and the behind-the-scenes moments, all with incredible attention to detail. Over time he built up a solid portfolio of reportage that depicts these lifestyles, which many people might not know still exist, let alone here in the UK.

Using a mixture of a Canon DSLR with a lone prime lens, a 6x6 medium-format camera and 35mm rangefinder, Neal's black & white series captures the frenetic nature of these events, with tight frames over a drag racer's shoulder, motorbikes kicking up mud, high contrast and lots of motion. Some images even give a tip of the hat to Jacques Henri Lartigue.

There is sometimes a stigma to the self-published book, but Neal's storytelling, eye for detail and camera skills are as fresh and as stunning as most of what is released by the big publishers.



photoshopdisasters.blogspot.com

Want to feel better about your own image-editing skills and have a good laugh at the same time? The Photoshop Disasters blog scours the world of commercial photography in search of the most egregious blunders and instances of fakery, and often they are quite staggering. Take, for instance, the Turkish Airlines ad in which the front wheel of the plane has, for some reason, been cloned out. You'll find numerous instances of arms and torsos turned in impossible directions and belly buttons in the wrong place. The bloggers have even found magazine covers where the reflection of the photographer behind the model has not been cloned out before going to press. Thankfully, AP has yet to appear on their list.

Photoshop Disasters will not only make you laugh and feel better about your own Photoshop skills, but you'll also likely feel better about your own attention to detail in the workplace – that is, until your boss tells you off for surfing the internet.



BOOK

Ken Russell: Filmmaker, Photographer

17 March-30 April. Lucy Bell Gallery, 46 Norman Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 0EJ. Tel: 01424 434 828. Website: www.lucy-bell.com. Open Wed-Sat 11am-4pm. Admission free

MOST know Ken Russell for his controversial films, such as *Women in Love* and *The Music Lovers*, but the famed director actually began his career as a photographer. Working for the Pictorial Press agency from 1954-1957, his photographs appeared in publications such as *Illustrated Magazine* and *Picture Post*.

The images on display in this exhibition feature some of Russell's more candid snapshots and street scenes from that period, some of which are, in the director's own words, 'a bit abstract or surreal... Some of the photographs were catch-as-catch-can. But I learnt the value of the perfect composition.'

Interestingly, the images in this collection

EXHIBITION



© TOPFOTO/ENRUSSELL

would no longer exist had the owner of the TopFoto image library, Alan Smith, not insisted on taking the negatives with him when they were discovered in 2005. A few months later Russell's house burned to the ground, and he lost most of his original work.



© SHIPPO DASH/FRONT FRIENDSHIP FAMILY LOVE & LAUGHTER BY MILK



© VICTORIA WASSILAKI/SHOOTING FROM FRIENDSHIP FAMILY LOVE & LAUGHTER BY MILK

Friendship Family Love & Laughter

Edited by Geoff Blackwell, Abrams, hardback, 208 pages, £35, ISBN 978-0-81098-891-0



ITS title suggests all the potential for cheesiness, but this gem is one of the most stunning collections

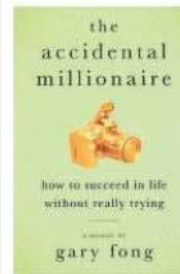
of portraiture we've seen in quite a while. Stemming from an international project to collect images showing 'Moments of Intimacy, Laughter and Kinship' (MILK), its momentum morphed it into a global photo competition in 1999. Three hundred winners were chosen by Magnum's Elliott

Erwitt, and ten years later he has picked 150 more for this new collection.

The photographers in this anthology have managed to capture those subtle moments when our guard is down and our true feelings manifest themselves – a father making funny faces at his daughter (above right), a child watching his grandfather shave and a man kneeling by his wife's headstone are some of the highlights. Each of these pictures tell a story without needing any words.

CONDENSED READING

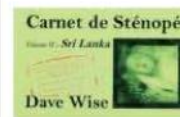
A round-up of the latest photography books on the market



● **THE ACCIDENTAL MILLIONAIRE: HOW TO SUCCEED IN LIFE WITHOUT REALLY TRYING** by Gary Fong, £11.99 Fong has photographed presidents, been named one of the ten best wedding photographers in the world and invented the Lightsphere. Packed with humorous anecdotes, Fong's memoir explains how a one-time slacker achieved such success – and how you can too.



● **CANON EOS 7D DIGITAL FIELD GUIDE** by Charlotte K Lowrie, £13.99 Wiley's Digital Field Guide series produces some of the best extensions to the manuals of popular camera models. In this study of Canon's EOS 7D, Lowrie wastes little time with button location and dives straight into fine-tuning your camera for optimal performance. This well-illustrated guide should help you get the most from your camera.



● **CARNET DE STÉNOPÉ VOLUME II - SRI LANKA** by Dave Wise, £15 'Backpacking alone in the developing world teaches a man to understand what it must feel like to be the only girl in the nightclub.' It's lines like these that make Dave Wise's travel writing so enjoyable. In his latest, Dave recounts his experiences in Sri Lanka with a Graham Greene-like passion for people and the smaller details. Illustrated with pinhole and DSLR images, Dave takes us off the beaten path.



● **OFF PISTE: AN ALPINE STORY** by Lois Hechenblaikner, £19.99 *Off Piste* is a laugh-out-loud satire of Austria's Alpine region in its current form contrasted with its traditional, rural way of life. Each double-page spread features a black & white photograph from early in the last century next to a colour photo from today showing how this aspect or use of space has changed.

Letters

Share your views and opinions with fellow AP readers every week

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Wins a 20-roll pack of 36-exposure Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 35mm film or a Fujifilm 4GB media card*



FUJIFILM

SNOW BUSINESS

I bought AP 13 February to take on holiday to Switzerland. What an issue! I read it three times and gained so much.

Lee Frost's article on exposing winter landscapes (*Whiter than white*) couldn't have been more timely. I learned more about exposing for snow and reading histograms from his article than any other I have read, and was blessed with some wonderful mountain shots whilst I was away (see above).

There was also a query on the Q&A pages from the AP forum regarding tethering. It may interest your readers who are also iPhone users that onOne Software has an iPhone application that allows remote firing of quite a number of digital SLRs.

Tony Harratt, Cheshire

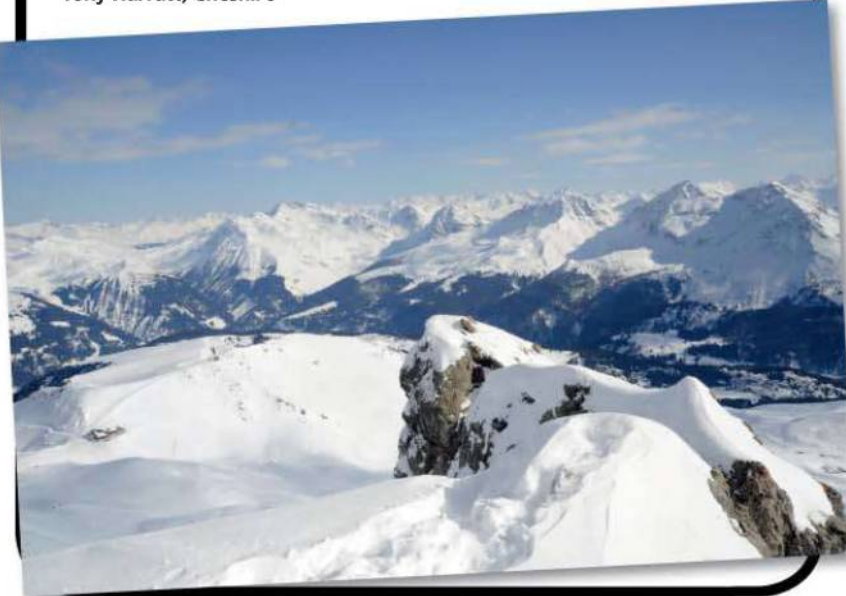
Write to...

'Letters' at the usual AP address (see page 3) fax to 020 3148 8130 or email to amateur photographer @ipcmedia.com

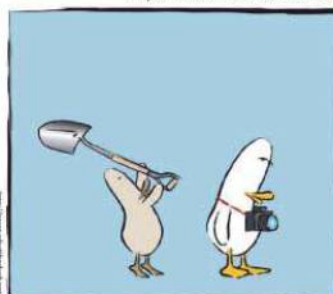
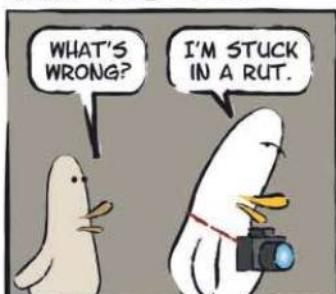
*Please indicate whether you would like to receive Fujifilm film or a memory card (please state type preferred) and include your full postal address

Backchat

Send your thoughts or views (about 500 words) to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication



What The Duck



<http://www.whattheduck.net/>

IN THE NEWS

In the last few weeks we've had four startling news items:

1. Jessops is to re-brand itself as the retailer offering customer service and product knowledge (*News*, AP 27 February). Welcome news, if a tad overdue, to those of us who remember queuing around the block to get into the little shop in Leicester, all because the person we would speak to would advise, knowledgeably, on what was best for us, not what earned them the best commission. Forgive my scepticism, but can the old dog really re-learn its long-lost tricks and get reasonably competitive on pricing again? A tall order, but I wish it every success.

2. Samsung rules out the purchase of Pentax which, if the latter is for sale, is surely an enormous lost opportunity (*News*, AP 20 February). With Samsung's electronics nous and Pentax's photographic heritage and loyal customer base, could this have been the chance to expand the ruling big two into a big three? Or at least a 'big two and a half'? 3. The Samsung NX10 is not compatible with GX systems (*News*, AP 16 January). Curiously, Samsung's plans to 'retain its links with' Pentax do not extend to making the NX10 DNG-software and GX/Pentax-hardware. Another lost opportunity. Had that been the case, I could well have been in the queue to buy one. As it is, it's not for me.

4. Damien Demolder chooses a Samsung GX-20, not just to be polite but because he genuinely likes using it and enjoys the images it produces compatible (*First look: Samsung NX10*, AP 20 February). The editor of probably the most influential photographic magazine in the English-speaking world, presumably with access to absolutely any gear going, makes an admission that, if he were to allow it to be known at an average camera club, would see him banished to a corner of the room with a dunce's cap on his head. Furthermore, if he were to venture into a Jessop's store in search of a dedicated accessory, he would almost certainly be sneered at and shown the door! OK, maybe not, but it could happen to me because I too use a GX-20. Not only because I genuinely like using it and enjoy the images it produces, but also because it's weather resistant, it's beautifully built, it uses my large-aperture manual-focus KA-mount macro and long telephoto lenses (all full auto-exposure and image stabilised), and the body, complete with the superb Pentax 16-50mm f/2.8 lens and a spare battery, cost me well under £1,000 new. And that was from using the ads in AP.

Mike Gosling, Northamptonshire

AN APPETITE FOR DIM SOME

I was discussing with my son the Photoshop workshops that appear in AP. Like me, he enjoys digital photography, but also like me, he is a film man. He suggested a sister magazine to AP that could separate one medium from the other, as digital is not true, or literal photography. We would have AP (*Amateur Photographer*) for film users, and

BETTER OR WORSE?

I found Richard Sibley's review of the Canon PowerShot G11 (AP 14 November 2009) confusing vis-à-vis image quality. He wrote that its JPEGs are on a par with many 12-million-pixel DSLRs (below ISO 800), but also that competing cameras with Micro Four Thirds sensors have 'vastly improved image quality'.

Ian Farrell's FAQ comments in Q&A, AP 13 February, also imply that the G11's image quality would be limited by its small sensor, including limited control of depth of field. I wonder, for instance, whether the G11 can produce respectable A3 prints? Would a stock library accept its (JPEG or raw) output? Could it compete with models that use a larger sensor, as Richard suggests, or does it fall short, as Ian implies?

Brian Taylor, via email



The PowerShot G11 is a very capable camera and it can produce images that make very nice A3 prints. For many people this means that it is a good stand-in for an SLR. However, the smaller sensor limits control over depth of field and means that the camera will struggle more than a DSLR in less-than-perfect conditions. I am sure that some image libraries would accept images from the G11, but I have no direct experience of this. Perhaps some readers can enlighten us? – Angela Nicholson technical editor

DIM (Digital Image Manipulation) for digital. What do you think?

Phil Ellis, Lancashire

Neither of those would last five minutes. What about AP, for people who like photography? – Damien Demolder, Editor

AN ODE TO FILM

Why the compulsion to ditch the emulsion As preached by the digital dudes?

Like tellin' a bloke to take portraits of folk, When he'd really just rather shoot nudes!

Peter Bell, Merseyside

If you love it enough, buy more of the stuff, And splash it at home in the sink. But pixels and grain are two routes to the same, There's not so much difference, I think. – Damien Demolder, Editor

RAID COMPATIBILITY

While Pete Birrell is correct about expanding the acronym RAID to Redundant Array of Independent Discs (*Letters*, AP 20 February), he is not correct about its compatibility with the Windows operating system. I run my computer on Windows XP Home Edition with a 1TB RAID array.

The important thing before fitting a RAID array is to find if the motherboard incorporates a RAID controller. I opened the case and identified the model and maker of my motherboard. I then downloaded the manual and found that the motherboard incorporated two hardware RAID controllers. I checked there was sufficient space for two more hard disks and the power supply could deliver sufficient

current, then I ordered two 1TB hard disks and the SATA cables. Next, I fitted the disks and followed the directions in the motherboard manual. Now when I turn my computer on, the machine checks that the array is healthy. If one hard disk were to fail, I would have to replace that disk and the machine would spend a day rebuilding the array and recovering my pictures

Bill Edwards, Essex

Thanks, Bill. I think – Damien Demolder, Editor

A WHOLE NEW WORLD

Just lately I have been employing a technique using ND grad filters to capture sunrises that I haven't seen anywhere else. I am not sure if it is because people don't know about it or because the pros don't want people knowing about it.

When using an ND grad in the normal way I have found that the top of the image can be too dark, and especially so when you have the horizon, a gap where the sun beams are visible, and then some clouds. It find it an annoyance, so I approached Lee Filters and they gave me the solution. The answer is to place another filter in the holder, but this time turn it upside down to create an ND stripe. Using two 0.9 grads gives a stripe of 0.9 with nothing up above it. Using a 0.9 and a 0.6 gives a 0.9 stripe with 0.3 above it. A 0.9 and 0.3 will give a 0.9 strip with 0.6 above it. The 0.9/0.3 combination is the one I seem to be using the most; I think it gives a very natural feel to the image. It took a while to get my head round what Graham Merritt at Lee Filters had imparted on me, but now I have a whole other world has opened up.

Jools Elliott, via email

BACK CHAT

AP reader David Dunnico on being hassled in the street and the suspicious minds of the state

WHO WOULD be a photographer? Every week there's a new incident concerning an overzealous security guard, police officer or member of the public questioning, harassing and confronting one of our community.

I should be used to it. For several years I've been working on a project about the rise of CCTV in Britain. I wanted it to be informative, thought-provoking and even funny. The police have done their best to make my work harder by printing posters with captions such as:

'Thousands of people take photos every day. What if one of them seems odd?'

Terrorists use surveillance to help them plan attacks, taking photos and making notes about security measures like the location of CCTV cameras. If you see someone doing that, we need to know. Let experienced officers decide what action to take.'

Or:

'A bomb won't go off here because weeks before a shopper reported someone studying the CCTV cameras.'

So has the advertising worked – do I get questioned every time I add to the project? Well, no. I was allowed to photograph several CCTV control rooms during the project. I asked if they had spotted me taking pictures of their cameras? Nope. Once, a passer-by asked me what I was doing. I told him, and he asked if I wanted to take a picture of the video intercom on his gated community.

I have been thrown out of a shopping centre for photographing a McDonald's logo (the security guard citing 'prevention of terrorism'). Given that the IRA bombed the centre in the 1990s, I might have hoped their security had a better idea of 'reconnaissance'.

I shot all the cameras one company has watching the streets around its city-centre offices. A security guard asked me what I was doing but after establishing that his company didn't own the pavements, he left me to it. I later asked for the CCTV footage of our encounter, only to be told that none of the cameras had recorded me.

The most hassle I ever got was at the Labour Party Conference in Manchester. I was stopped by the police four times within 300 yards. They told me they had been instructed to question people taking photos. I asked for a stop-and-search form and I was delighted to read my description as being of medium build and short-haired, rather than the fat and bald disguise I usually wear for street photography.

I wouldn't be as arrogant as to say my photographs are of great historical importance, but I think the subject I'm trying to document is. So I will carry on, and hope that you can go on recording what is important you.

● An exhibition of David's project is at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre until 27 March, alongside a production of George Orwell's *1984*. For more details visit www.ddcc.tv.

The EX Family



EX150

EXD200

EX300

EXD400

The multiple award winning family has grown recently with the introduction of two new units. Firstly the EX300 has more power than the EX150 and a new grab handle for easy positioning of the light. And the addition of fan cooling for constant and reliable service in a larger polycarbonate body. Easy to use controls make the EX300 desirable to any user where more power and versatility is required in a studio set up.

With user changeable flash tubes, switchable modelling lamps, fan cooling and Infrared sensors you can enjoy the best features available today. In addition to the EX300 the new EXD400 offers a full array of enhanced Digital features: with an intelligent and user configurable sync controls to a Digital readout with Auto power dumping when the power level is reduced. Ideal when you just want to reduce the power by a small amount the next shot will have the correct level of light.



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Andy Rouse@AP

Thoughts from a wildlife photographer's world



CAMERA traps are most often used by photographers to capture pictures of particularly shy creatures. Infrared kits consist of a beam transmitter and receiver, which are connected to a camera's shutter release. The beam is aimed across a path on which the subject creature travels and, when the beam is interrupted by its body, the transmitter sends a signal to the camera to take the picture. The trap Andy used for the hyena used a pressure plate that is buried just below the ground or beneath leaves. When the animal stands on the plate the camera is triggered.

Your camera will be aimed in the direction of the beam or the plate and focused on the point at which the animal is expected to make an appearance. It is also likely that flash units will be positioned to help light the subject, and these will be connected either wirelessly or by cables to the camera, or directly to the triggering device.

For more information on traps visit www.wildlifewatchingsupplies.co.uk.



ANDY Rouse is one of the world's most prominent wildlife photographers and a passionate

conservationist – two roles that go hand in hand as far as he is concerned. A professional photographer for more than ten years, Andy has worked in every corner of the planet and photographed everything from ladybirds to elephants. He has a dozen books to his name and regularly appears on TV. He has also won multiple wildlife photography awards.

In this weekly column, Andy recounts some of his experiences, shares his thoughts and highlights issues from the wildlife world. You can see his work at www.andyrouse.co.uk and read his blog at www.andyrouse.co.uk/blog.asp. You can even become a fan and keep up to date with 'Andy Rouse Wildlife Photography' on Facebook.

Is there a place for camera traps in wildlife photography?

CAMERA-TRAP CONUNDRUM



A HYENA ate my camera... to be precise, it ate the camera, lens, flash and pressure pad. All that remained were a few circuit

boards and a frayed cable hanging in the trees. The trap was set the day before to photograph a rare brown hyena in South Africa and I had spent most of the time on all fours. Camera traps take quite a lot of skill to set up. First, I had to find a regular track the hyena was using, then check it daily. Then I had to find a place where it would walk onto my pressure pad and trigger the camera. I don't think I have the patience any more!

On that fateful morning I sat there with the remnants of my camera spread around and had an epiphany. I realised that, for me, one of the main problems with camera traps is simply that I am not there for the shot. Photography is a record of our emotions and a measure of our creativity. If I am happy I take bright, happy portraits; if I am moody and grumbly then I take dark, edgy pictures. Seriously, though, being absent when the shot was taken has robbed me of the memory and experience of seeing wildlife.

By checking the footprints leading up to the trap I could see that the hyena had indeed triggered the flash; I could also see from the footprints running away that it had been scared. Clearly, it had come back to take its revenge. It caused me to start thinking from the animal's point of view: what must it be like for a nocturnal animal to be startled like this? For something bold like a hyena, it probably made it destructively curious; for a shy animal, though, it would probably terrify it. On that day I decided never to use a remotely triggered, unattended camera trap at night ever again. I could not justify my right to



© ANDY ROUSE

Andy took this kingfisher picture by triggering the camera remotely by hand – not by using an unattended camera trap

terrify an animal just for the sake of a picture.

The past two years have seen passionate debate among photographers about camera traps. Several pictures taken with an unattended setup have won major competitions (although the wolf that won the Wildlife Photographer of the Year title has since been disqualified). I asked my Facebook and blog followers what they thought about this, and a staggering 86% of the 1,226 replies thought that a camera-trap image should not win a major award. Most went on to give the reason that the photographer did not actually take the shot. It seems clear to me that the strength of opinion tends towards having a separate category for camera traps in major competitions. You cannot ban them completely, as that would go against the creative ethic of photography, but it would seem they should be separated.

Camera traps are used in scientific research and they have a vital role to play in conservation – everything we know about the Sumatran tiger, for example, has been learnt from camera traps. But in photography? Well, it's not for me. I would rather wait four uncomfortable days in a hide eating worms to get the shot. When I took this picture of a kingfisher diving (above), I did so by triggering the camera remotely by hand. Yes, I missed a hell of a lot of shots, but I saw and experienced the kingfisher for myself. The exhilaration of getting 'the one' lasts to this day, and it's something I have never felt with any of my trap pictures. The debate continues... **AP**



BRINGING
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EVERY WEEK

PHOTO INSIGHT

Wildlife photography requires immense skill and patience, but as Steve Bloom explains, when you capture a moment of conflict it is well worth the effort



STEVE BLOOM

The world's leading wildlife photographer is bringing his expertise to AP. Steve has written dozens of books on wildlife photography

IT'S not every day you capture an image like this. In photography timing is crucial, and with a pair of feisty bald eagles it's even more so. I was lucky enough to photograph this surprising image while working on my book *Untamed* a few years ago. I had wanted to capture a shot of bald eagles, but knew they would be difficult to photograph. In Alaska, where I was shooting, there was a woman called Jean Keene, also known as 'the eagle lady', who used to feed the wild eagles along the Homer Spit. The spit is a large stretch of land that juts out into the water at the southern tip of the Kenai Peninsula and is surrounded by beautiful mountains.

Every day during the winter months Jean would feed fish or moose meat to the eagles, and over the years more and more eagles would visit, sometimes upwards of 200 or 300 birds. Tourists would come to watch at feeding time, although some people objected to what she was doing, fearing the spread of disease or harm to the birds. After her death in 2009, a law was passed that made feeding the eagles illegal.

While she was alive, Jean became very popular among photographers. She would allow photographers into her yard and when the eagles came down to feed you could get the most wonderful close-up shots of the birds. The surrounding landscape was so stunning it made a fantastic backdrop. I spent four or five days in her yard watching her feed the birds. The eagles would perch on a nearby branch and suddenly swoop down, grab the food and shoot into the air again. It was a wonderful sight to behold.

I'd never photographed these birds before so it was a case of trial and error as I worked out the best way to go about it. This was a particularly interesting trip for me because it was the first time I'd used a DSLR camera rather than film, so there were many things to consider. Working digitally was a new experience and at the time CompactFlash cards were expensive. You could only buy 1GB or 2GB memory cards then, which were quickly filled when shooting in raw.

I took a number of shots on my Canon EOS-1Ds camera, but it couldn't

take as many frames per second as DSLR cameras can now. I thought this would be a disadvantage, but actually it wasn't limiting at all. With modern digital cameras, when you are using the motordrive facility, there is a temptation to keep firing the shutter and not think about the images you are taking. However, when you have fewer shots to play with, you have to be more considered about when to release the shutter.

I had my 70-200mm lens attached to the camera, but the birds were quite close to me anyway. There was a lot of light that morning; it was slightly hazy, but very bright, and the light was soft. If the light had been harsh, the white parts of the birds would have been burnt out.

I'd been watching the eagles for some time when suddenly one of the birds picked up a fish and was spotted by another eagle. There was a brief moment of conflict as

one eagle launched towards the other, and after a brief clashing of wings it passed. This was intense: the birds were looking directly at each other and neither was prepared to give up the fight, but it happened so fast there was no time to plan my composition. By using a fast shutter speed I was able to freeze the motion.

The birds may be frozen in mid-air, but there is a sense of movement created by the arched shape of the wings. They take on the look of propellers, pulling the eye anti-clockwise and creating a tension that heightens the excitement and immediacy of the image.

This is the sort of situation where you can spend days watching and waiting, hoping you'll have a lucky break. When I'm photographing wildlife, I have two objectives in mind: to take portraits, and to capture action, interaction or drama. I



To see more images by Steve visit www.stevebloomphoto.com. Signed copies of Steve's book *Untamed*, published by Abrams and priced £29.95, are available from www.stevebloomshop.com

BOTH PICTURES © STEVE BLOOM



remember the guide saying to me, 'I'll get you to the action, but you have to capture it.' As a photographer, you don't want to be standing there so taken aback by what you are seeing that you forget to take any shots!

There was a lot of luck involved in capturing this image. The relationship of the two birds was down to chance, and the fact I was able to place the birds so they were centred in the frame was also a stroke of luck. It's easy to clip wing tips or tail feathers when photographing birds, and this shot needed to be framed precisely if it were to work.

One of things I like about this image is the wonderful dabs of yellow that punctuate the scene. Overall, the colours are quite solemn – mainly dark blues and black – but these spots of colour create dashes of light and make the image sparkle. **AP**

Steve Bloom was talking to Gemma Padley



You can't force a moment in wildlife photography, but you can wait for something to happen. When you put yourself in the right place, you're more likely to strike it lucky. While conflict between animals or birds is not something you can plan, you can sometimes anticipate when things are starting to materialise. I took this photograph in northern China at a tiger-breeding centre. We had been driving around in our vehicle when suddenly two tigers stood up and scrapped briefly. It was over in a moment, but I was lucky enough to get the picture. Wildlife photography is about relaying a moment in all its honesty. Luck plays a part, but patience, persistence and a keen eye are indispensable.

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Nikon D3 + AF-S 14-24mm & 24-70mm f/2.8G Kit.....	£5,355.00
Nikon D700 SLR body.....	£1,749.00
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SPI SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGING

STAR STUDENT

Vanessa Kurz

ENROLLED ON: Diploma

in Digital Photography

AGE: 39

EQUIPMENT: Canon EOS 50D with 10-22mm and 24-70mm lenses



Student introduction

My father taught me the basics of photography with his old Minolta and a fabulous 58mm f/1.2 lens that spoilt me for life. A few years later, when I was in my late teens, he gave me his camera as a Christmas present.

During my college years, I often thought about switching to a photography course, but instead decided to finish

my Latin American studies degree and an MSc in environmental issues in Latin America. I continued pursuing photography as a hobby on and off until I was given the opportunity to do a photographic job for a UK charity in Honduras and El Salvador. That was when I used a digital camera for the first time. The results were very disappointing as I still had so much to learn, but I enjoyed the experience, particularly the immediacy of digital imaging.

I love to observe people, and capture their expressions and behaviour on camera. I suppose you could say I like portrait, reportage and street photography. I enjoy interacting with my subjects, even though I can be shy and find it quite a challenge at times. It gives me great satisfaction when I succeed in making people feel at ease, especially when those who hate having their picture taken are pleasantly surprised by the result.

Why did I enrol on this course? Well, I know I can take decent photos as I won first prize in a 2008 photographic competition run by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation in the Dominican Republic, but I am inconsistent. I am intuitive rather than technical. Too many of my better photographs are still down to luck. I want to overcome the technical hurdles and learn to use my photographic equipment with confidence.

THE SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGING – in association with Nikon – is one of the largest and most vibrant photographic education communities in the world.



At the heart of the image

Summing up

WE SAY: Vanessa is well above the average level of students on this course. Her attention to detail is nice to see, and she clearly has a good understanding of composition, exposure and other technical elements. It is also great to see someone who is not afraid to communicate with strangers to get great images.

To enrol or for more information visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/spi

Or send this coupon to The School of Photographic Imaging Administrator, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 9th Floor, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU or call 0203 148 4326

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The Amateur Photographer Masterclass with **Brett Harkness**



BRETT HARKNESS

Portraits

LEARN
FROM THE
EXPERTS

In the second of our brand new Masterclass series, **Brett Harkness** shows three AP readers how to create fantastic portraits using off-camera flash. **Gemma Padley** joined them in Manchester and picked up a few tips

A COLD, dank day in February doesn't bode well for an outdoor location shoot, but with Brett Harkness at the helm it is impossible not to feel fired up. Funnily enough, the firing (of flash) is the aim of the day, but not just any flash – this month's workshop is about getting the most from your flashgun and creating punchy portraits with a kick. Three AP readers keen to learn more about how best to use flash joined Brett at his studio in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, for a jam-packed and informative day. They each brought with

them their own DSLR camera and selection of lenses, which included a mixture of wideangles and telephoto zooms.

OFF-CAMERA OR ON?

To warm the readers up and break them in gently, Brett talked them through the equipment they would be using (see right) and gave them each a PocketWizard remote-control release to use. The first part of the workshop provided an overview of the effects you can achieve when using the flashgun



Equipment

You don't need a lot of equipment to create vibrant portrait images using flash, but a good understanding of how your flashgun works is important. Brett used one or two flashes and a softbox attachment, although this isn't essential. Flash stands were used on location. A 70-200mm or similar telephoto zoom lens is useful, and a wideangle optic of at least 24mm will come in handy should you want to include more of the surroundings. The readers used a PocketWizard (pictured) to fire the flashguns remotely. PocketWizards are wireless triggers that send a signal to each flash when the shutter is pressed. A transmitter is attached to the camera's hotshoe and a receiver to the flash, and they are compatible with any digital SLR camera. Visit www.pocketwizard.com for more information.

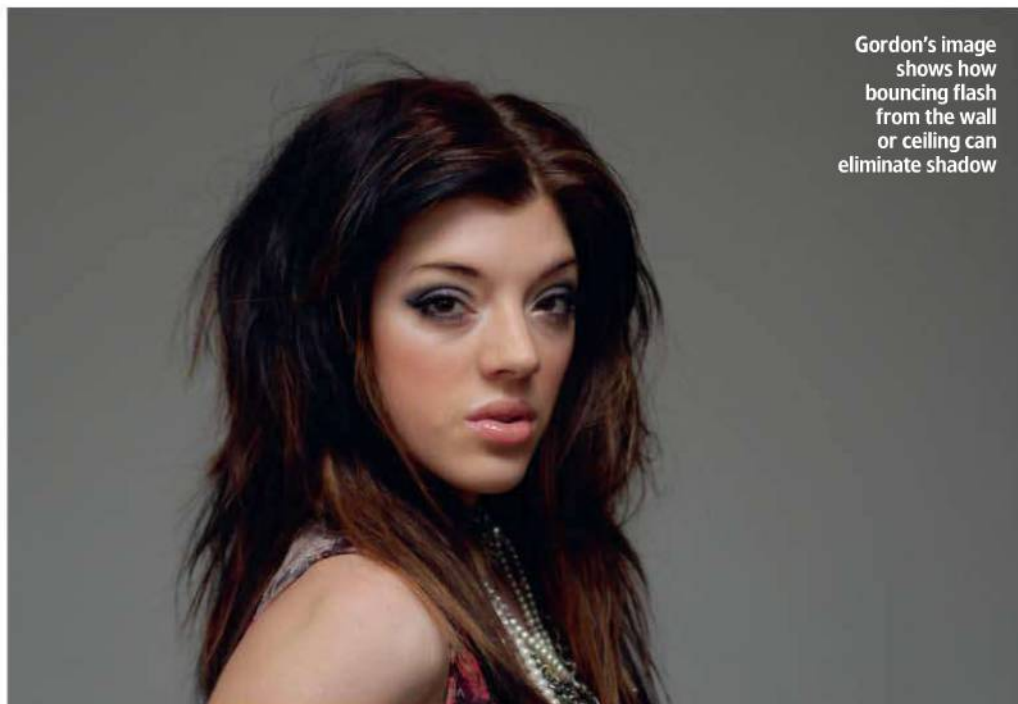


Your AP Master... Brett Harkness



Brett graduated from Nottingham Trent University in 1996 where he studied photography. He then became chief photographer on a Royal Caribbean cruise ship, overseeing a team of photographers. Brett used this opportunity to work on his travel photography and he developed a passion for photographing people. In 2001, he and his partner Kristie founded Brett Harkness Photography in Rochdale, Manchester. Together they run studio and location-based workshops throughout the year. From documentary wedding photography to lifestyle shoots and model portfolios, Brett is an expert on all aspects of portrait photography.

www.bretharknessphotography.com



Gordon's image shows how bouncing flash from the wall or ceiling can eliminate shadow

The AP readers...



Chris Johnson-Standley

Chris lives in Stockport and works as a video producer. He enjoys portrait photography and uses a Nikon D80 with a 70-300mm lens. 'I'm amazed by the results you can get by using only a small amount of equipment', he says. 'Brett explained clearly how to use the aperture to control the light and it wasn't as confusing as I'd expected.'



Gordon Stockley

Gordon lives in Chester and enjoys portrait, landscape and abstract photography. He uses a Nikon D50 with either an 18-55mm or 70-300mm lens. 'I came away with a far greater understanding of how light affects the subject,' says Gordon. 'I've realised how effective using off-camera flash can be.'

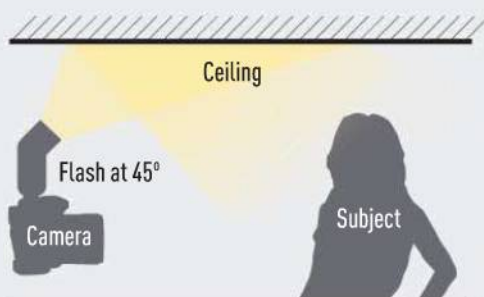


Mick Hughes

Mick is interested in photographing people and landscapes. He uses a Canon EOS 40D with either a 17-85mm, 28mm or 80-200mm lens. 'I was apprehensive about coming to a professional workshop, but it was a supportive environment,' says Mick. 'It was great to talk to the other photographers and I felt I was taking my photography to a new level.'

Bouncing flash off the ceiling

When you are using your flashgun on the camera and you fire it directly at your subject, unwanted shadows may appear (see right). The light from the flash travels in a straight line and causes the image to look flat and lifeless. If possible, it is better to bounce your flash off a wall or the ceiling to create an evenly lit image and eliminate these shadows. When you bounce flash, the light is diffused as the ceiling or wall acts as a reflector and the light hits the subject evenly. This helps to avoid hotspots where there is a concentration of flash. The easiest way to bounce flash is to swivel the flash head to a 45° angle to the ceiling as the diagram below shows.



mounted on the camera, and Brett explained the pros and cons of using the flash in this way.

'On-camera flash is fine if you don't have time to take it off the camera – if you are shooting people at a wedding, for example, and the action is happening all around you. It's great for speed and ease, but there are drawbacks,' says Brett. 'The most obvious one is that you are limited to where you can place the flash because it is fixed to the camera. If you can bounce the flash off the ceiling or a wall (see above) that's great, but you may not always be able to do this.'

'When the flash is attached to the camera and you are moving around, the

TOP TIP BOUNCED FLASH

If you are using your flashgun on the hotshoe, try turning it to an angle to bounce the flash off the ceiling

distance between flash and subject is always changing,' he continues. 'This means you have to keep adjusting your flash settings, otherwise you will under or overexpose your image. If you remove the flash from the camera and use a softbox positioned a few feet from your subject instead, the light source will be constant. You are free to move around knowing that the light hitting the subject will always be the same so you don't have to worry about changing your flash settings as you move.'

THE CORRECT EXPOSURE

Mastering flash on a basic level can be boiled down to a few key elements. The main thing

‘On-camera flash is fine if you don’t have time to take it off the camera, but there are drawbacks’

you need to remember is that light intensity changes depending on where the flash is placed in relation to the subject. The further away the flash is from the subject, the less intense the beam. The intensity increases when it is closer to the subject.

This is important to remember because it affects your exposure. For example, if you take a shot using an aperture of f/8 and move the flash closer to your subject, you need to stop down to avoid overexposing your image.

In the studio, Brett set up a stationary flash on a stand and covered it with a softbox. He then encouraged the readers to move backwards and forwards with their camera-mounted guns so they could see how the changing power ratio between the softbox gun and their hotshoe guns created different lighting effects on the model’s face.

TTL FLASH AND FLASH EXPOSURE COMPENSATION

There are two key methods of using flash. One is manual flash, where the flash settings are chosen by the photographer; the other is through-the-lens (TTL) flash. With TTL flash, a pre-flash calculates the amount of flash/ambient light in the scene and works out the amount of light needed for a correct exposure. When using TTL flash metering, you can adjust the amount of flash using flash exposure compensation. This is useful for correctly exposing skin tones.

In TTL mode the camera calculates an average exposure for the lighter areas of the scene, which sometimes causes these



TOP TIP KEEP YOUR FLASH CONSTANT

Try using a softbox flashgun (if you have one) on a stand or ask someone to hold it to keep the light constant. A PocketWizard or similar remote-control trigger will allow you to move around, but remember to adjust your camera settings as you go if you are also using a hotshoe flashgun



areas to look grey. Increasing the exposure compensation will correctly expose the skin. How much to adjust the exposure by depends on factors that include the amount of light reflected from the subject, the size of the subject in the frame, the distance of the subject from the background and the amount of ambient light. Consequently, there is no one method for using flash exposure compensation – it is about working out what you want from your shot and adjusting the flash accordingly.

ON LOCATION

Once the readers had tried using their flashguns in the studio, it was time to dive headfirst into the next stage and detach the flash from the camera. There was not a glimmer of sun in the sky, but Brett assured us that this would work in our favour. Jumping in a minibus, we all headed towards Castlefield in Manchester. Brett had earmarked several locations – a railway arch, scrubland and a ruddy-red wall – that on the surface looked unremarkable, but in the final





CHRIS JONES/STANLEY

Brett showed the readers how to underexpose the background and use fill-in flash to light the models



images were transformed by the use of off-camera flash.

Brett showed the readers the effects they could create using a softbox, as well as a softbox with another flash positioned behind the subject. When the PocketWizard is activated, it triggers both flashes simultaneously, lighting the background and the subject's face.

The readers tried using coloured gels with their flash to create dramatic backgrounds. 'If the colour is too dense the light won't penetrate it, so you have to get the right depth of colour gel for the intensity of flash,' says Brett.

He also warned about taking care when positioning the gels. Always leave an air space between the gel and the flash head, otherwise the gel will stick to it and permanently colour the flash head when the flash gets hot, he added.

EXPOSING FOR AMBIENT LIGHT

Chris's image (left) was taken during the day, but as you can see the background is almost black. Creating this effect requires underexposing the ambient background light by 1 or 2 stops and using the flash to fill in the light on the subject and correctly expose the face. It is a technique that works well on an overcast day when the ambient light is flat. As Chris's picture shows, the effect can be quite magical – the flash lights up the rain to create an image that sparkles.

'You can use the shutter speed to control the ambient light and create interesting effects,' says Brett. 'For example, slowing it down will make more of the ambient light. Your choice of shutter speed will also affect the balance of colour in the image. Underexposing the scene by using a faster shutter speed can increase the saturation of colour.'

For Chris's image (see bottom), a softbox was positioned to the side of the model and a bare flash behind. The main flash was set to quarter power and the back flash to half power. The readers set their cameras to ISO 400 and used 1/200sec at f/7.1, adjusting the aperture as necessary.

CREATING SHADOW

Where you position the flash affects the way the shadow falls on the subject. 'By placing the flash at an angle to your subject it is possible to create images with a great deal of depth,' says Brett. 'If you walk around and try different angles, you will see how this creates different effects.'

'In Chris's image (below right), the flash



BRETT HARRNESS



CHRIS JONES/STANLEY

TOP TIP
USE TWO FLASHGUNS
Try using a flashgun to light the background and another to illuminate your subject

Trying creative poses

Once you have mastered how to set up your flash and feel comfortable using it in different lighting situations, you can concentrate on the compositions themselves, capturing spontaneous expressions and natural poses. You don't always have to photograph from a conventional angle. Try crouching down and pointing your camera upwards to see what effect you get. Have a go at using a wideangle lens to include more of your subject's surroundings or to make your subject loom large in the frame. In Mick's image taken from the ground up, he has used this technique to great effect, creating an austere, intriguing portrait. You could try coming in tight on the subject's face or take a full-length body shot.



MICK HUGHES

TOP TIP CAMERA ANGLE

Explore unusual shooting angles and don't be afraid to crouch down or come in tight to create portraits with an edge



Would you like to take part?

OUR Masterclass series has taken on a new format. Every month we will invite three to five AP readers to join one of our experts on an assignment over the course of a day. The experts are **Lee Frost** (landscapes), **Brett Harkness** (portraits), **Paul Hobson** (wildlife) and **Clive Nichols** (gardens). This is Brett's first Portrait Masterclass and he will also appear in July and November. Lee will appear in June and October, Paul will appear in May and September, with Clive in April, August and December.

If you would like to take part, visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/masterclass for details of how to apply. Please remember to state which Masterclass you would like to attend and make sure you include your name, address, email address and daytime telephone number in your application. Each participant will be able to use his or her own camera, lenses and other equipment.

'You can use the shutter speed to control the ambient light and create interesting effects. For example, slowing it down will make more of the ambient light'



ERIS JIMSON-STANLEY

TOP TIP CREATE SHADOW

You can control the amount of shadow by where you place the flash. Try moving around your subject to see if you can use shadow to create a sense of depth

has lit up only half the subject – the other half of the face is in shadow. You can clearly see the dramatic effect shooting from side-on has had. If you want the whole face to be evenly lit, the model's head needs to be angled towards the light source. Conversely, the less the model turns to the light, the more shadow you'll get.'

POSING THE MODELS

Portrait photography is about the relationship between the photographer and the subject, and even more so than any other type of photography. One of the biggest skills when photographing people is to act naturally so your subjects feel at ease.

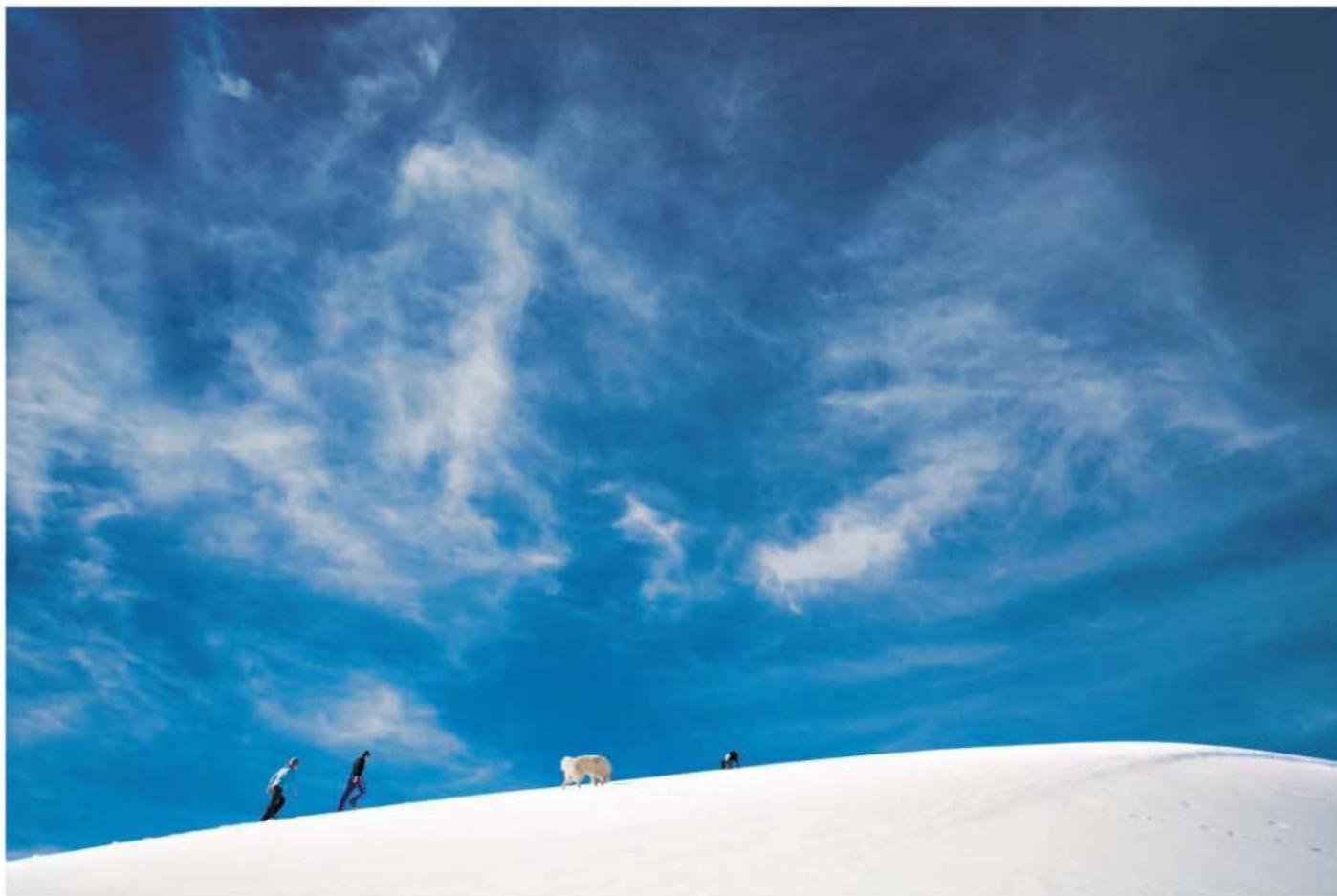
'You can't keep the person waiting while you fiddle with the camera or flash,' says Brett. 'They will become uncomfortable or lose interest. An understanding of the technical side is important, but even more

crucial is the way you relate to your subject.'

For this Masterclass, the models were used to standing in front of the camera, but if you are photographing a friend or family member who is not used to being photographed, you may need to spend time gaining their confidence. Choose a location where they feel comfortable and try not to photograph in silence – keep talking to your subject to make them relax. You're more likely to capture natural expressions and gestures in this way.

There is no single way to 'pose models' as every person is different. While you will need to enter a person's personal space to achieve intimate shots, be conscious of not overcrowding your subject. The aim of portrait photography is to produce an image that tells you something about that person and shows them at their best. Forcing a pose when your subject is uncomfortable is unlikely to achieve this. **AP**

SIGMA



OUR WORLD

Nathan Welton: Born in 1977 in the United States. Has travelled the world photographing athletes engaged in adventure sports and horseback riding. Featured in advertisements, newspapers, magazines, and other media, his photos have been recognised with a variety of awards. His wedding photography company "Dreamtime Images" is an internationally known studio.

Photo data: SIGMA 10-20mm F3.5 EX DC HSM, 1/640 second exposure at F6.3.

NATHAN WELTON SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS.

In a Colorado national park, the snow-covered dunes stand out against the deep blue sky.

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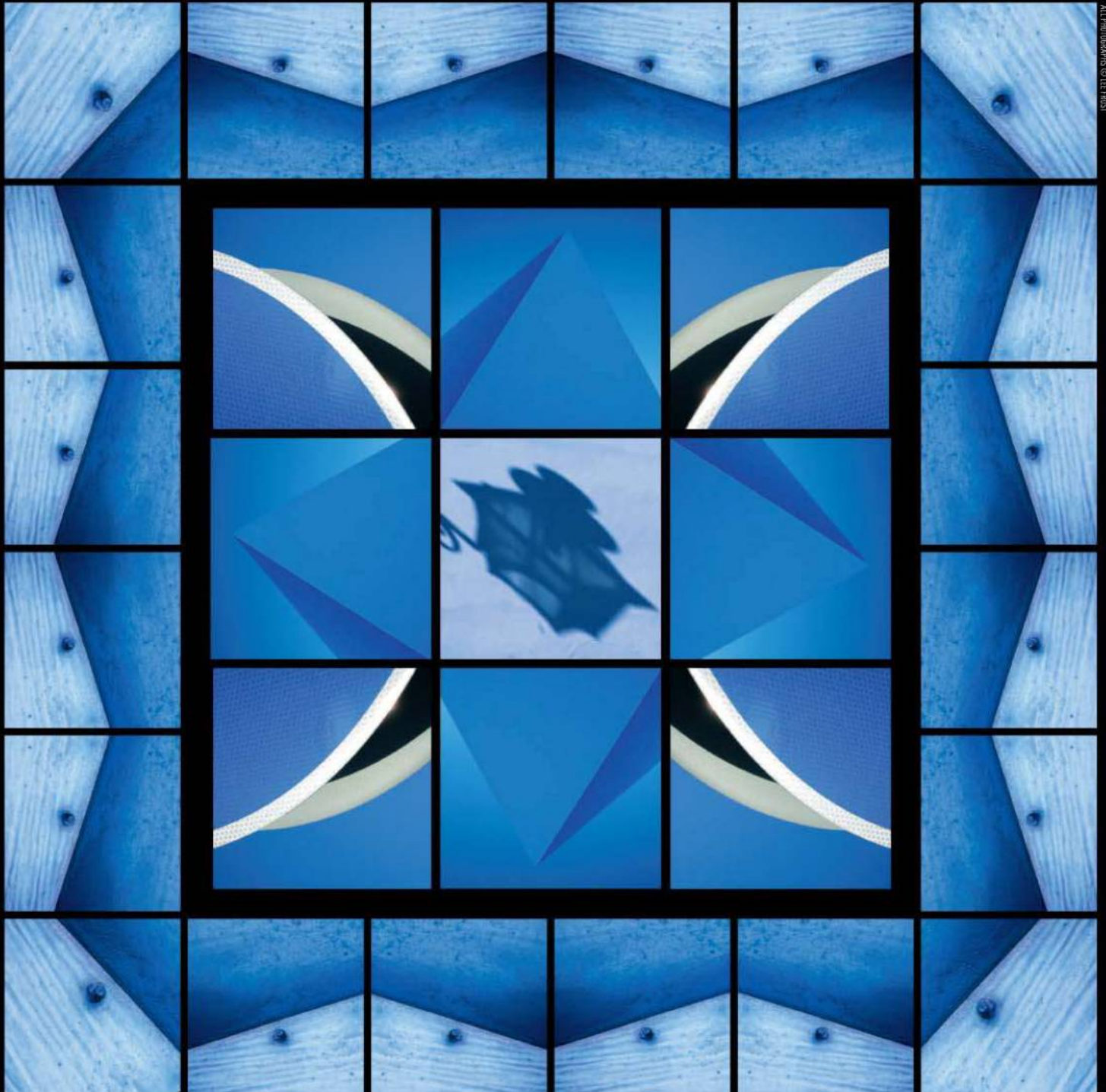


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Pick a colour

Got the winter blues? Why not go shoot them.

Lee Frost explains why colour not only adds a sense of reality to our photographs, but also makes a great subject in its own right

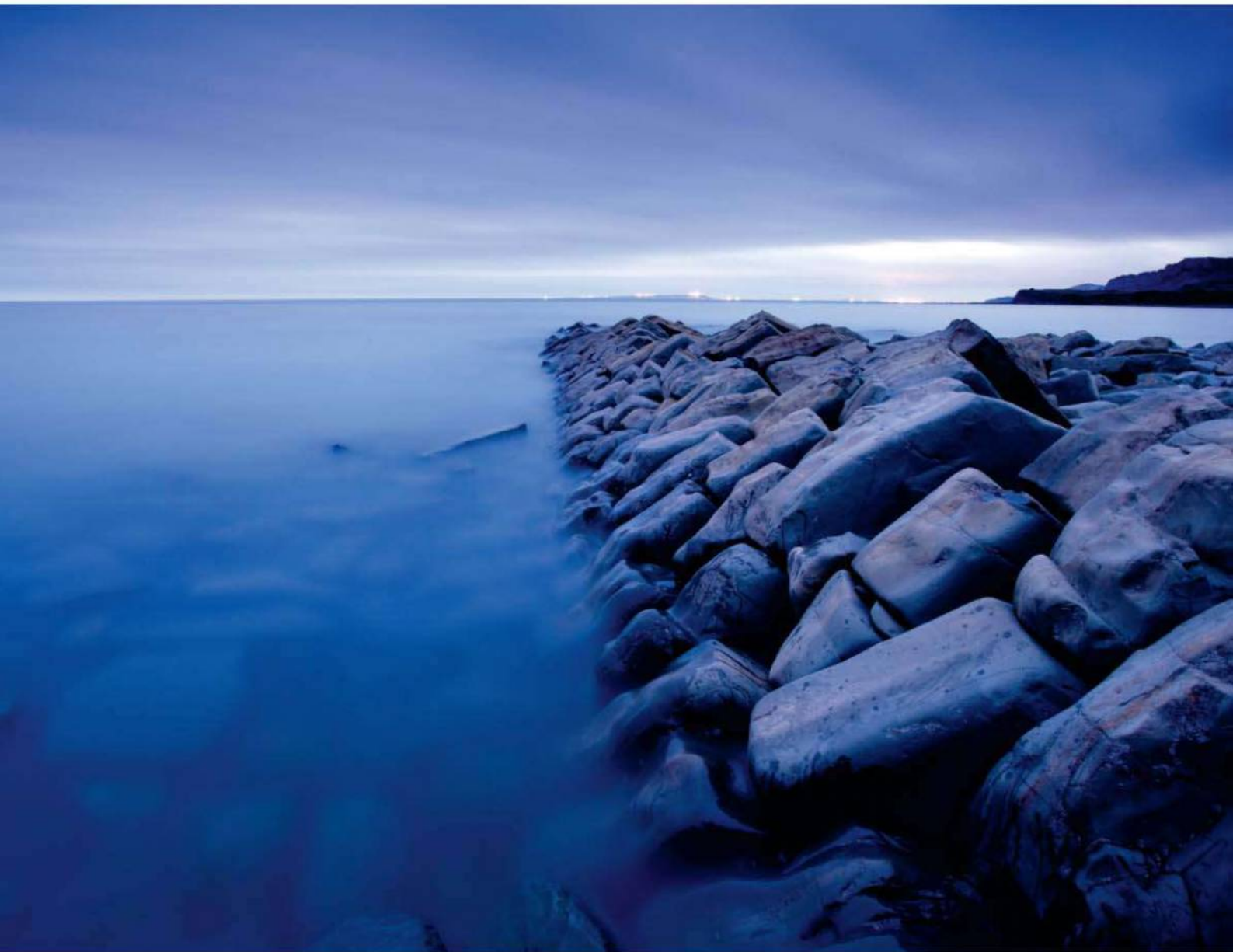
WHEN we raise a camera to our eye, more often than not it's the scene or subject that encourages us to take a photograph. We tend to see things for what they are – a beautiful landscape, an interesting building, a perfectly tended garden – rather than looking closely at the elements that comprise the picture. However, being able to take a step back from reality and look at the world in a more lateral way can be a great benefit to us as photographers because it allows us to peel away the superficial surface layer and get to the real bones of the subject.

One of the most important 'bones' in a photograph is colour. As well as making everything look realistic, colour can provoke

a strong subconscious response in the viewer. Colour can be exciting, unsettling or calming. It can create tension and jar the senses, but it can also soothe and relax us.

You only have to look at the way we use colour to describe our moods, such as 'red with rage', 'green with envy', 'blue with cold', and the way colour is used to evoke a certain mood or response. When a TV commercial tells us to relax in a certain bath product, you don't see a red liquid being poured under the hot tap – it's green, which is a soothing, relaxing colour. Equally, when we need to be alerted of danger, there's one colour that can do it – red, the most powerful colour of all.





IN ISOLATION

The easiest way to make use of this emotive power is to let colour take centre stage – making it the main subject of an image rather than a mere ingredient, so it fills the frame for full effect.

Focusing on colour in this way will not only help you to appreciate its importance, but it's also a great way to improve your eye for a picture because you'll be forced to look at the world differently. You will also have to simplify your compositions so only the absolute minimum is included.

Towns and cities are great places to find colour because there's such a huge variety of subject matter on every street, such as painted walls and doors, parked cars, signs, billboards, shop displays and road markings. Industrial estates and retail parks are another option, as bold colour is widely used in commercial buildings. A trip to a well-known furniture store needn't involve spending hours looking at things you don't want and buying things you don't need – let

your other half do that while you take great photographs of the store's signature yellow and blue!

And let's not forget gardens. With the arrival of spring you're unlikely to find such variety and intensity of colour anywhere else, so dust down your macro lens and prepare to be inspired.

The key to success is isolating the colour so there's nothing else in the frame to dilute its impact. A tray of tomatoes on a market stall will pale into insignificance if you take a wideangle shot of the whole stall, but zoom in tight or physically move closer so only the tomatoes fill the frame and you'll have a striking study in red.

Not that you always need to work in close-up, of course, as colour can also occur on a grand scale. Think of the rolling dunes of a great desert: you could capture an area covering hundreds of square metres where only one colour is evident. The same applies where woodland is your subject, or lush green hills – and you can double it if you're

'The key to success is isolating the colour so there's nothing else in the frame to dilute its impact'

standing on the edge of a lake and the scene beyond is mirrored in its calm surface.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

The quality of light plays an important role in dictating how colours appear. In sunny weather colours look much more vibrant than they do on an overcast day. Similarly, if a scene is lit from the front, with the sun beaming down over your shoulder, the colours will look stronger than if that scene is side-lit or back-lit.

The time of day makes a difference, too. Colours can look stronger during early morning and late afternoon, when the sun is lower in the sky, than they do at midday. That's because the light at midday is much harsher so there's more glare, and with the sun almost overhead shadows are dense and highlights very bright, making it difficult to record a full range of detail.

Bright overcast weather works very well on subjects that rely on delicate colours and fine details. Close-ups of flowers and other natural



subjects are best photographed in overcast conditions, because contrast is much lower and shadows much weaker than in sunny weather, so the rich colours stand out.

Finally, light can be the colour. If you shoot a landscape before sunrise or after sunset on a cloudy day, your photographs will often come out blue due to the colour temperature of the light. At sunrise or sunset in clear weather, yellow will be the dominant colour – especially if you include the sky or its reflection in water. And remember, these extreme colour casts can be enhanced by adjusting the white balance setting on your camera. Select 'Cloudy' or 'Shade' at dawn or dusk and your photographs will be even warmer, while 'Tungsten' will make blue light even bluer.

SUPERSATURATED

A polarising filter can be a great ally when it comes to making the most of colour because it eliminates glare on non-metallic surfaces such as foliage or paintwork, as well as deepening blue sky,

reducing reflections and improving clarity. The level of improvement depends mainly on the weather and lighting conditions. For the strongest effect, use your polariser in clear, sunny conditions when there's more glare and polarised light around. Blue sky will be made deeper during the morning or afternoon, when the sun is low in the sky, and when the sun is at 90° to the camera.

A polariser won't do much to the sky on a dull day, but it can dramatically improve colour saturation elsewhere in the scene by removing glare, so it's always worth a try.

Back home, you can improve colour saturation while processing the raw file, or later in Photoshop via Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. As your images will comprise a single colour, another option is to use Image>Adjustments>Color Balance and then use the appropriate slider to intensify the colour in your image. Either way, don't go over the top, otherwise the effect will look unnatural and forced. **AP**

WHAT NEXT?

Having focused your attention on a specific colour and come up with lots of great images, what do you do next?

CREATE A COLOUR POSTER

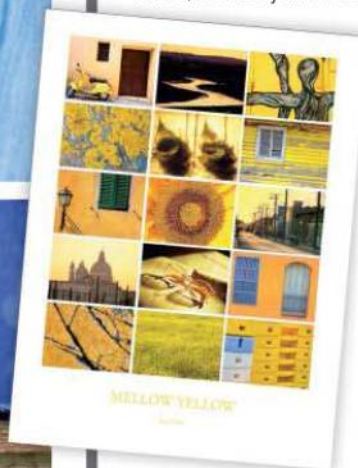
No single image is likely to be an award-winning masterpiece, but if you group several together you'll get strength in numbers, with each shot adding visual value to the next.

On that basis, how about creating a colour-themed poster? This is a relatively straightforward Photoshop task, and the end result will look stunning.

All you need to do is select 12-18 images that work well together. Make sure there's a mixture of subjects on both a large and small scale. They don't all have to be landscape or portrait format, but the layout will be easier if they are. It's also a good

idea to resize all the images to, say, 6x4in. Next, create a new canvas (File>New), make it big (20x30in at 300ppi), then use the Move Tool to drag and drop each image onto the canvas and the arrow keys on your keyboard to get them neatly aligned. If necessary, the canvas can be enlarged at any stage (Image>Canvas Size).

When you're happy with the look of the montage, use the Text tool to create a text box below the images and add a title and your name. Finally, enlarge or crop the canvas so there's an even white border around the montage.



MAKE A MOO CARD MONTAGE

Another option is to create a set of MiniCards at MOO (visit www.moo.com) from your images and use them to construct a montage. For £11.99 you get a set of 100 printed cards, each measuring 28x70mm. The cards are created by uploading your images to the MOO website, and you can have a different image on each card, the same image on every card or any variation between these extremes.

A few days after placing your order, a smart plastic box will drop onto the doormat containing your 100 MiniCards. Take a large sheet of white or coloured mount board (A2 will be fine) and start arranging the cards to create a montage. When you're happy with the design, stick the cards down with adhesive or double-sided tape, then frame it and hang it on the wall.

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Life's a beach

When he tired of directing television adverts and music videos, **Peter Scammell** moved to Devon and rediscovered his love of photography. He tells **Jeff Meyer** why balance and precision are the keys to his dark and moody beach scenes



IMAGERY has always been an important part of Peter Scammell's life. Perhaps best known for his work directing music videos for bands, Peter's long professional career has taken him from art school in the 1960s to advertising and graphics, film school and filmmaking. He started companies with the likes of photographer Anton Corbijn, and even formed his own band. All the while, as he pursued these endeavours, he was taking still images in his spare time.

Peter cut his teeth on his brother's full-frame 10x8in land camera in his youth and that sparked a life-long interest of shooting landscapes and city scenes. However, his 'Eureka moment' as a photographer didn't come until a few years ago when he bought a poster by the American photographer Bill Schwab – a moody black & white image of the Halos-Ambassador Bridge in Ontario, Canada. Peter was slowing down his video work at the time and preparing to move away from London, so the poster was filed away and forgotten. Then, three years ago, Peter rediscovered the poster in the attic of his new home in Devon and was overwhelmed when he saw it again with fresh eyes. Inspiration struck.

'It was like listening to Elvis for the first time and you want to form a band,' he recalls. 'The picture just connected with me instantly, and I thought, this is what I should be doing.'

Soon after that experience, Peter bought a Canon EOS 400D and went exploring different locations around Devon, trying to see if he could recreate that mood. 'Both Bill Schwab's poster and my friend Anton [Corbijn] inspired the work I'm doing now,' he says. 'But I don't want that to sound like I go out with my camera and think, "What would Anton do?" I like to think of a picture as a song that you rewrite and put your own spin on and make it your own. That's what I'm trying to do with my images.'

While admittedly not the sort of photographer who will spend all day with a flask of coffee waiting for the light to be just right, Peter is also not the sort of photographer who eschews the rules of composition or traditional tastes. In fact, this is what he strives for in his images: a delicate balance of the timeless classic mixed with a hint of the abstract. His purpose in taking a picture isn't necessarily to photograph the organic landscape as it appears, but to capture the mood that the landscape inspires within him at that moment.

'I like to try to reinterpret one scene over and over again,' Peter says, 'and reinterpretation comes down to light. Darkness, high contrast, soft grey – all these evoke different moods, and I will try to work with and enhance them by using time-lapse techniques, panning, zooming in, shooting a burst of images or even shooting from inside my car. It doesn't work

Lone clouds are a hallmark of Peter's images, inspired by the painter Edward Hopper's solitary figures in landscapes





ALL PICTURES © PETER STAMMEL



‘I like to try to reinterpret one scene over and over again, and reinterpretation comes down to light. Darkness, high contrast, soft grey – all these evoke different moods’

every time. Many times I’ll just be throwing the camera about trying to find a moment.’

Most of his subjects are beachscapes, with the odd field or hedgerow here and there, ‘but I always go back to the sea,’ he says. Start Point on the South Devon coast is one location he often returns to, while Lanacombe is another favourite. He carries his camera with him everywhere in case he is confronted with these ‘moments’, such as light breaking through the clouds or illuminating the mist.

His preference is for the subdued light of evenings, and so many of his pictures are long exposures of fading light collapsing over the horizon. ‘You have to be very careful of the time lapse and that you avoid cliché,’ says Peter. ‘If you use it subtly and differently, you can come out with something effective. When I started to focus just on the landscape and use it to convey emotions, I began to explore how I could use motion in long exposures to help do this.’

Peter’s exposure times range from a few seconds up to a minute, depending on the light and how late in the evening he is shooting. If he wants more abstract, ‘wobbly’ images with lots of ghosting, he won’t use a tripod, but generally he will use one as it allows him to freeze things around his motion. If Peter is taking a 50sec exposure, for instance, he will let the camera and

tripod sit for 30 seconds, then pick it up and move it up and down for the last part of the exposure to enhance the sense of movement in the tide. ‘I like it when the camera moves and you get layer upon layer in the picture,’ he says. ‘That’s an effect that really appeals.’

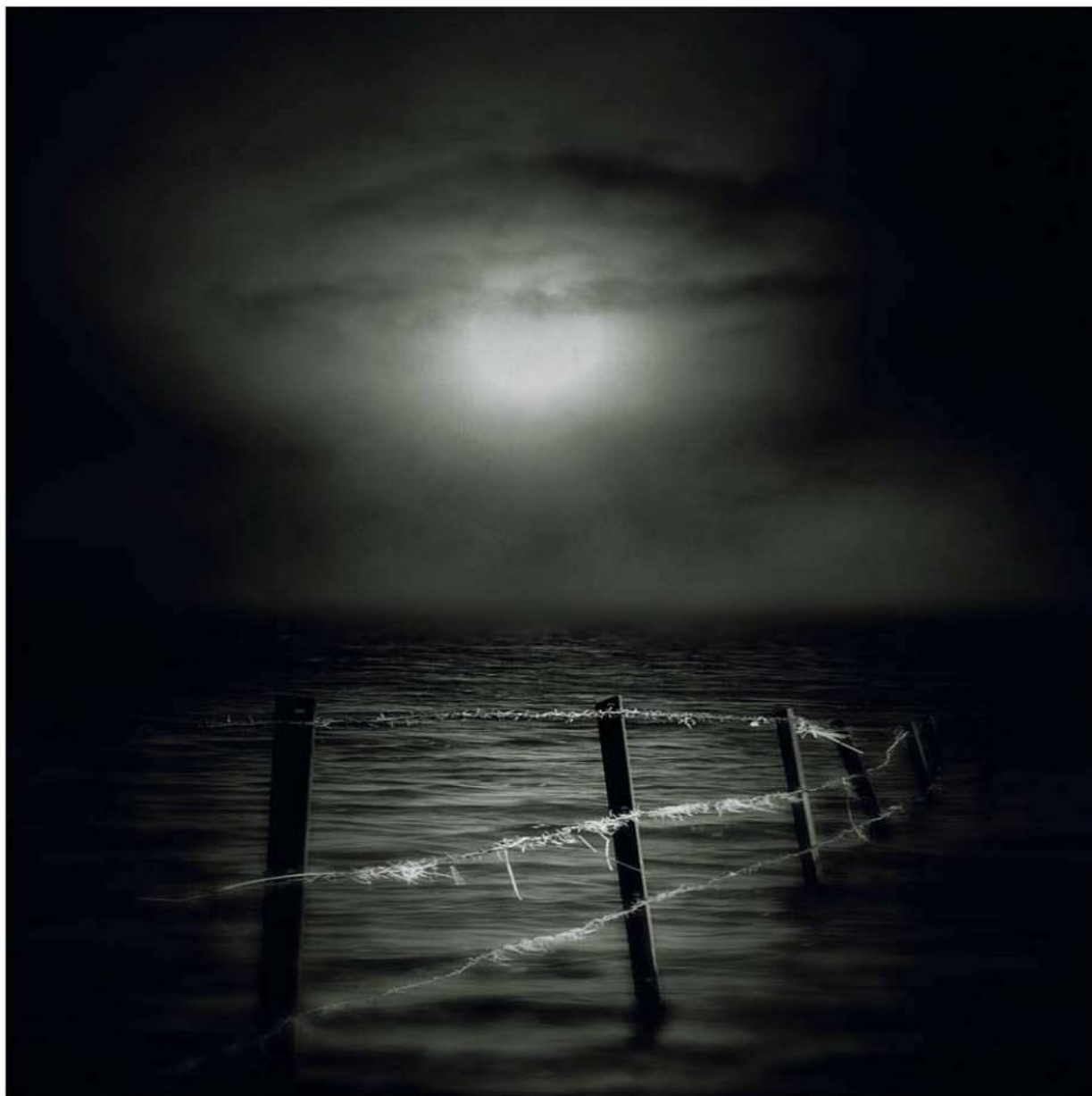
He will try to create a lot of his effects like this in-camera, but he does not shy away from using image-editing software if it can help him create the mood he wants. For example, Peter counts the painter Edward Hopper as one of his photographic inspirations. He loves the mood created by Hopper’s use of a solitary human figure within a landscape, so when Peter composes his images he tries to create the same feeling by framing an isolated cloud hovering alone above everything else.

‘It’s an element that I find very important to the composition and balance of my pictures,’ he explains. ‘But unfortunately the clouds are always changing within the landscape. The perfect cloud might join with another and lose its shape. Often I will think that this is the frame I want and the cloud blowing in the direction of my scene is in the shape that I want, but by the time it gets here I know it will dissipate. So to get the cloud I want, I will take a separate picture of it and cut it out later.’

Peter looks for featureless skies and then frames wide when he

Peter often likes movement and ghosting in his images. To achieve this he will lift his tripod up and down or left and right for the last part of a long exposure





Sun, moon or low cloud, Peter likes to centre the elements of his compositions to create a sense of balance

spots a cloud with a pleasing shape or illumination. He will then frame another shot close up. Later, in Photoshop, he will cut out the cloud and drop it into his composition. Often that will be the extent of it, but sometimes he will put the cloud through a swirling filter in Photoshop to exaggerate its shape. The key is subtlety, though. He says: 'I ask myself, "Is this obvious?" I'm a huge critic of my own work. While I want the picture to have an element of the abstract, I also want it to look perfectly natural. I want the viewer to be able to recognise what he or she is seeing.'

Peter also makes a point of underexposing each picture to see what textures he can bring out in post-processing. 'The Curves tool is king,' he says. 'That and the selective colour filter are the two items I use most often in Photoshop. I use these to bring out the luminosity in my highlights.'

Starting with his colour file, Peter converts it to black & white. Then, using the selective

colour tool, he will go round certain areas of the image that he wants to burn in, such as a small piece of sea or the crest of a wave. Then he will apply an 'S' curve to bring out the contrast. Occasionally, he will apply Motion Blur to an area to enhance a feeling he had. He'll make several variants of the same image file and experiment to see how far he can push things like saturation and contrast before it loses its subtlety.

'If you've got the framing, light, composition, and so on, then post-processing is just a case of me manipulating the light,' Peter explains.

'I don't like to make a picture too graphic. You can use filters to make something look psychedelic or even make a picture look like a painting, but that's not for me. I aim for subtle brushes of texture. Creating and enhancing atmospheric light – that's all I'm looking at.'

'I'm not trying to make a beautiful organic representation of a place, but I am trying to keep it real,' he adds. 'I'm trying to keep it so there's a classic element to it, but also slightly

poetic and different from what's traditional.'

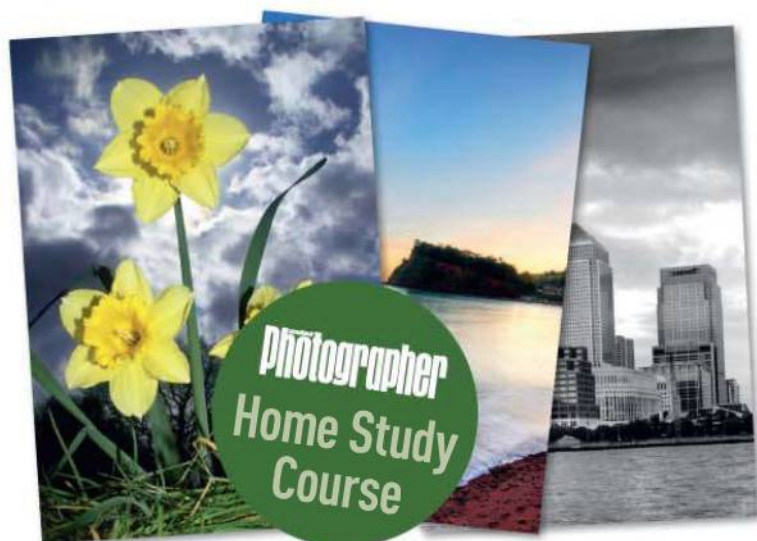
Black & white is the only medium for this, he says. It's less distracting than colour. 'You either accept the reality of colour as what's in front of you, or you start messing with it and it becomes garish,' he adds. 'Colours are tied into mood and emotions for me, and I find that the tones of black & white images speak to me much more than colours do.'

'Black & white is more direct and I can get to what I want to say easier. With colour you have so much more that can go wrong. Monochrome also removes a picture from reality and makes it clear that you're creating a variation on reality. It's an abstract, but not an overly "arty" form of abstract that people can't understand – it's grounded in reality. So I see my pictures working on two levels – I can see trees and waves and know what they are, but I've manipulated it just slightly so that it gives off a déjà vu feeling like we've been there or felt this before.' **AP**

To see more of Peter's images visit www.flickr.com/photos/9980034@N06/

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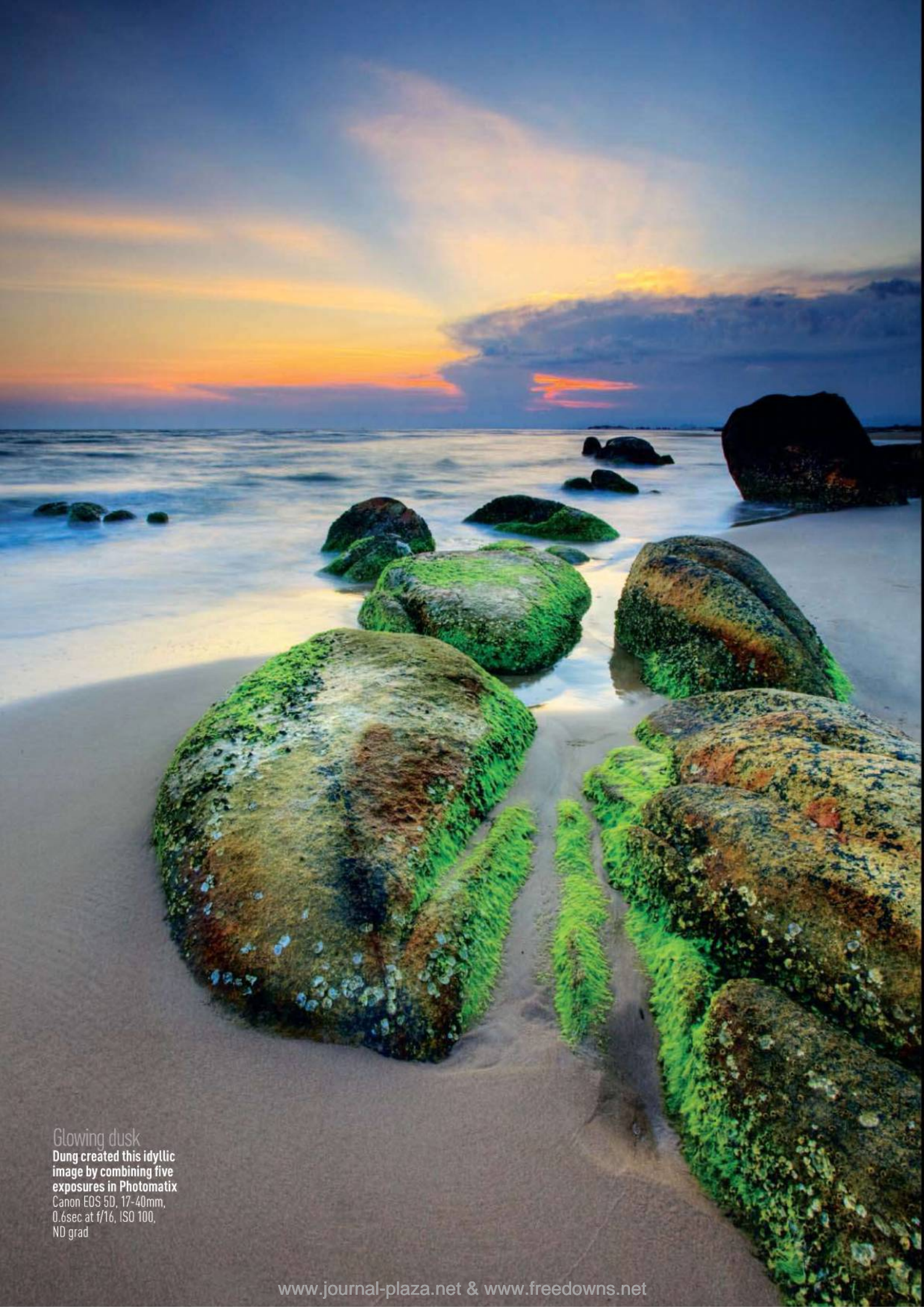
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AP-SP 13 MARCH 2010



Glowing dusk

Dung created this idyllic image by combining five exposures in Photomatrix

Canon EOS 5D, 17-40mm,
0.6sec at f/16, ISO 100,
ND grad

AP publishes more reader photographs than any other photography magazine

ReaderSpotlight



Dung Huynh Greater London

Dung, 36, is a research scientist by profession who developed an interest in photography as a teenager. 'I started taking landscape photography seriously two years ago when I was inspired by Scotland's naturally beautiful landscapes,' says Dung. 'I try to get my images right in-camera so I can spend less time post-processing.'



Storm brewing

1 Dung took this moody evening image at Phan Thiet beach in Vietnam
Canon EOS 5D, 17-40mm,
3secs at f/4, ISO 50, ND filter

Winter morning

2 Trails of water streak through the sand at Southwold Pier in Suffolk
Canon EOS 7D, 10-20mm,
1/4sec at f/16, ISO 100, ND filter

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Market Harborough,
Northamptonshire
1 Colin took this shot while lying
on the side of the jump to show
as much height as possible
Canon EOS 40D, 24-105mm,
1/8000sec at f/4, ISO 400

Washbrook Farm MX,
Cambridgeshire
3 A fast shutter speed freezes
the spray of mud as this rider
takes the corner at speed
Canon EOS 40D, 70-200mm,
1/1600sec at f/2.8, ISO 400,
Speedlite 580EX II

Mildenhall Motopark,
Cambridgeshire
2 Colin used two Canon flashes:
one on the camera, and one on
the other side of the track
Canon EOS 40D, 70-200mm,
1/3200sec at f/4.5, ISO 400, Canon
Speedlite 580EX II, PocketWizard

Washbrook Farm MX,
Cambridgeshire
4 The fisheye lens distorts
perspective and creates an
unusual effect
Canon EOS 40D, 10mm fisheye,
1/4000sec at f/2.8, ISO 400,
Speedlite 580EX II



Colin Brister Hertfordshire

Colin, 41, started taking pictures when he was 12 years old after his father, who was also a keen photographer, gave him a Zenit-E camera. Colin took pictures of everything he could, and when his wife bought him a Canon EOS 400D two years ago he 'fell in love' with photography. A former motorcyclist, Colin's favourite subject is motorsports photography, but he enjoys photographing any extreme action.

**EDITOR'S
CHOICE**

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This is a great action shot that really captures the essence and atmosphere of dirt-bike racing. I love the angled frame and the diagonal travel of the bike. Plus Colin's careful use of flash creates an excellent frozen exposure while still showing speed and movement





Ron French Hampshire

Ron, 65, started photography in the mid-1960s when he bought a Praktica LTL camera to take pictures of his young son. These images were taken using his Fujifilm FinePix IS-1 infrared camera. Ron enjoys photographing landscapes and wildlife, and is currently experimenting with infrared and HDR photography. He uses a B&W 093 filter and the red/blue channel swap in Photoshop to tweak the amount of green in each image.

Northington Grange, Hampshire

1 Infrared creates an 'old-fashioned' look
Fujifilm FinePix IS-1, 28-300mm, 1/40sec at f/8, ISO 100

Netley Abbey, Hampshire

2 Rushing clouds and imposing ruins take on a ghostly appearance when shot using infrared
Fujifilm FinePix IS-1, 28-300mm, 105sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

Worbarrow Bay, Dorset

3 Ron combined three or four exposures using Serif PanoramaPlus software
Fujifilm FinePix IS-1, 28-300mm, 1/200sec at f/8, ISO 100





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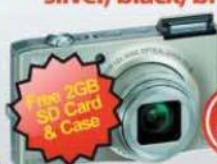


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Left: Steve McCurry. 'Footsteps of Buddha, August 2004'

Right: 'Jodhpur, India, 2007'



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Amateur Photographer's... **ICONS OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

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Steve McCurry 1950-present

Magnum and **National Geographic** photographer **Steve McCurry** is arguably one of the top photojournalists working today. **David Clark** looks at his busy and productive career

STEVE McCurry is widely acknowledged as one of the world's finest photojournalists and a master of using light and colour. He has spent his professional life exploring the world with his camera and his extraordinary portfolio of work ranges from contemplative landscapes and penetrating portraits to hard-hitting images of the tragedy and brutality of war. Much of his work records and celebrates cultural diversity in our rapidly changing world.

McCurry, now 60, became a photographer in 1975 after graduating from Pennsylvania State University. 'At that point I decided that whatever I did in my life, I

wanted to explore this world we live in,' he said in an AP interview in 2004. 'I wanted to see everything and take in different cultures. I wanted to wander and observe life.'

Since then, he has travelled extensively around the world on assignments and has been both a member of the Magnum agency and a senior contributor to *National Geographic* magazine for many years. His awards are numerous and include the Robert Capa Gold Medal in 1980, four First Prizes in the 1985 World Press Photo competition, three more World Press Photo awards in 1992 and the Lucie Award for Photojournalism in 2003.

McCurry initially aimed to become a documentary filmmaker, but discovered a preference for the still image after shooting pictures for his college magazine. After leaving college and travelling around Europe for a year, he worked on a newspaper for two years before turning freelance and travelling to India. The trip was intended to last for a few months, but he stayed for two years.

Shortly before the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan at the end of 1979, he illegally crossed the border with Pakistan disguised in traditional Afghan attire. He shot some of the first images of the conflict and hid his films from the Russian authorities by sewing them into his clothing. The resulting pictures were published in major magazines worldwide.

These pictures effectively launched McCurry's career, and he initially worked for *Newsweek* before



'Most of my images are grounded in people. I look for the unguarded moment, the essential soul peeking out, experience etched on a person's face'

➔ later joining the staff on *National Geographic*. Since then he has covered wars in countries including Cambodia, the Philippines, Kuwait and Iraq, and continues to photograph the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan.

His work has sometimes involved danger and he has twice been reported killed. He has been beaten up by a drunken mob during a religious riot in India, arrested and chained in Pakistan, and has survived a plane crash in the Balkans. The plane ended up submerged under ten feet of water in a lake, but McCurry swam to safety. From a photographic point of view, he also has a knack of being in the right place at the right time: he returned to his New York home from a long assignment in China the day before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001.

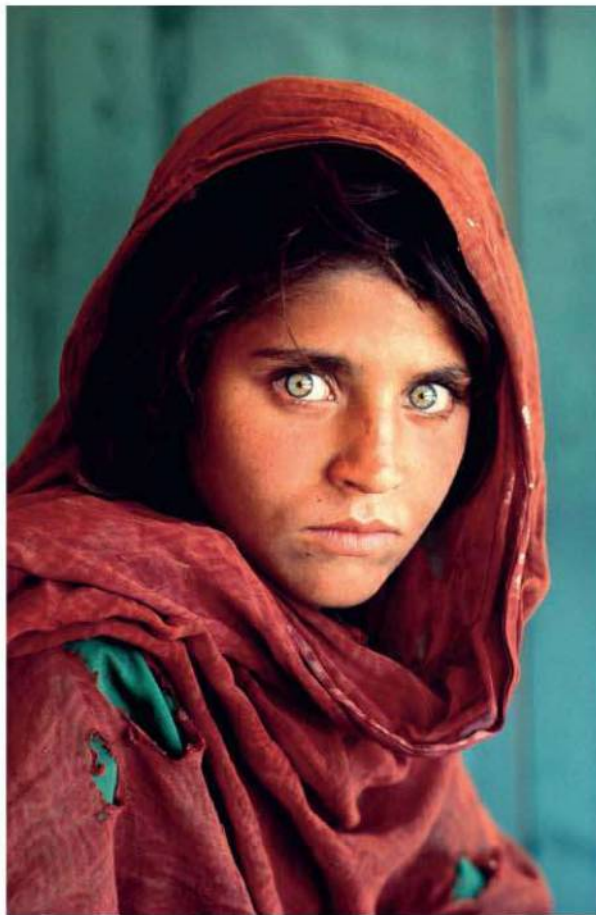
McCurry is best known for one stunning image, which was shot in Afghanistan in 1984. It is a portrait of a 12-year-old Afghan girl whose parents had been killed and who was living in a refugee camp in Pakistan (see right). The girl's haunted, intense eyes, which seemed to symbolise the suffering of the Afghan people, made this picture internationally famous.

'This is a young girl who has spent most of her life in the back of a truck,' McCurry told AP in 1999. 'You can't really be normal if you live this wretched existence. This little Afghan girl comes from a brutal country, yet here's a little bit of beauty in all this devastation.' After many years of trying to find out what happened to the girl, McCurry eventually located her safe and well in 2002. 'Finding Sharbat Gula and her family was one of the most memorable moments of my life,' he has said.

His assignments are all shot in colour. He particularly enjoys shooting in low light, and although he uses digital capture he still prefers to use 35mm transparency film. He has an archive of between 800,000 and 1,000,000 images and estimates that 90% of the images have been shot on Kodachrome.

McCurry is based in New York, but travels for around nine months of each year. 'My life is shaped by the urgent need to wander and observe,' he has said, 'and my camera is my passport.' He particularly enjoys travelling to south Asia for its 'strong connection to the past' and 'the juxtaposition of the ancient world with an ultramodern way of life.'

Many of the images he has captured



'Afghan Girl at Nasir Bagh refugee camp, Peshawar, Pakistan, 1984'

on his travels are portraits. They are shot in natural light and record usually fleeting connections with people from the numerous and diverse cultures he has encountered. His subjects are often pictured in very different and sometimes outlandish traditional clothing, but these sensitive and often incisive images serve to emphasise the similarities between people and the common ground that links very different cultures and races.

'Most of my images are grounded in people,' McCurry has said. 'I look for the unguarded moment, the essential soul peeking out, experience etched on a person's face. I try to convey what it is like to be that person, a person caught in a broader landscape that you could call the human condition.' **AP**

BOOKS

McCurry's many books include *The Imperial Way* (1985), *Portraits* (1999), *The Path to Buddha: A Tibetan Pilgrimage* (2003) and *In the Shadows of Mountains* (2007). His most recent book is *The Unguarded Moment: Thirty Years of Photography by Steve McCurry* (2009).

WEBSITES

McCurry's official website is www.stevemccurry.com. It features numerous galleries of work shot throughout his career, a biography, a blog, a print sales section and details of McCurry's workshops. There's more of his work on the Magnum website, www.magnumphotos.com.

Biography

1950

Born on 24 February in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1974

Graduates from Pennsylvania State University and travels extensively around Europe

1976

Begins a two-year stint as a newspaper photographer

1978

Starts his freelance career and travels to Asia

1979

Crosses the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan to capture images of the Soviet invasion

1980

Wins the Robert Capa Gold Medal for 'best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise'

1984

Shoots the famous portrait of the Afghan refugee, later identified as Sharbat Gula. It is later published on the cover of *National Geographic* and becomes famous worldwide

1985

Wins an unprecedented four First Prize awards in the World Press Photo competition

1986

Becomes a full member of Magnum Photos

1992

Wins three more World Press Photo awards for his images shot in Kuwait during the First Gulf War

2001

Photographs the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center

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How to submit your pictures

Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (please include the original files from the camera along with your submitted versions on your CD). Tell us a little about the pictures and, if you can, include details of equipment used and exposure settings. Send your photographs to 'Appraisal' at our usual address (see page 3). Please enclose an SAE if you would like them returned.

Anxious Brian Moseley

Praktica Super TL2, 50mm, Ilford FP3

TOP TIP

It's a great idea to revisit past photographic exploits with a scanner, as often you'll find that images discarded at the time have improved with age. A bit of software can also help polish forgotten gems

BRIAN SAYS that he has just returned to photography after a long break, and since he has retired he has discovered the wonders of digital photography. Specifically, that he can revisit his past and scan all of his old prints which, with the help of an Epson scanner, is exactly what he has done. The pictures that he has sent me are absolutely fantastic; beautiful candid shots that he took with a Praktica Super TL2 and a Petri V.

The shot I have picked out is of a woman on a train looking out of the window as she travels through the Lake District,

taken in the 1970s. I think if Brian is still wondering whether to return fully to photography, I'd say that it would be criminal if he didn't, especially if he can recapture the observational skills and eye for a picture that he displays here. I love the way the picture is divided in

two, with the woman given the greater prominence. Yet, the inside view and outside view are linked by the woman's glasses and her face, because you can see her reflection in the window.

And with the clock in shot and the anxious look on her face, she appears to be chewing her nails as

the clock ticks. In fact, Brian has even called it 'Anxious'.

Maybe she's just thinking about her shopping, but taken together, her expression, the ticking clock and the reflection in the window builds an amazing drama; we could conjure up any plotline we like and I think it would fit this picture. It's a great observation and I'm looking forward to Brian getting to grips with his new Nikon D50 so that he can send us some more pictures. If he can recapture his glory days, then I think we'll be seeing Brian in the AP Gallery soon. For all these reasons, this is my picture of the week.

PICTURE
OF THE
WEEK

'Taken together, her expression, the clock and the reflection in the window builds an amazing drama'

JESSOPS
YOUR PICTURES. OUR PASSION.

Robin Bill Sell

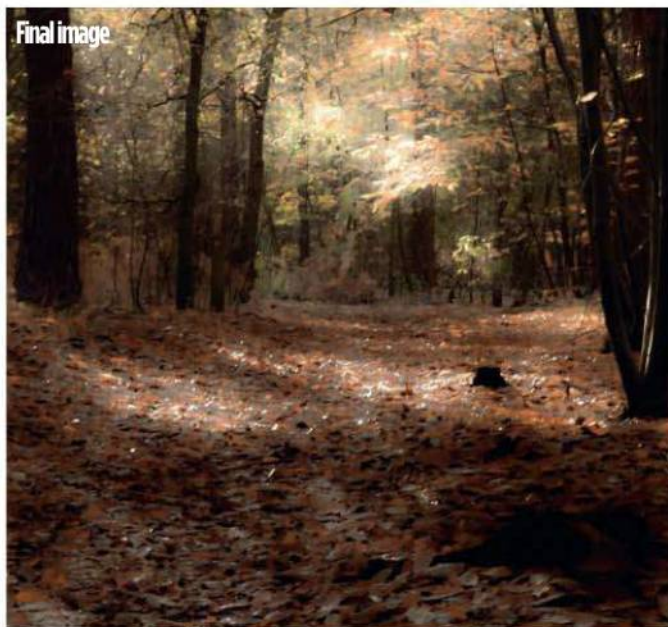
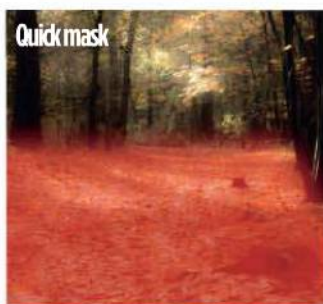
Nikon D40, 55mm,
1/40sec at f/9, ISO 200

IT HAS to be said that we receive a lot of pictures of robins, but this one from Bill gives us a slightly different view from the norm. People always try to capture robins on branches and make them look as if they are out in nature, when in actual fact the place we most often see robins is in our gardens. In this picture, the robin is clearly in a garden because it is sitting on the back of a garden chair.

What I like about this picture is the robin's pose, the way its body is facing one way but its head is facing the other, as though it has heard something, and giving us a flash of that famous red breast. It's an unusual view because we don't often get to see the tail feathers and the bird's back whilst at the same time knowing that it is indeed a robin. In Bill's picture here, we have the best of both worlds.

It's a lovely image with a pleasant green, and nicely out-of-focus, background. Bill says he would like it even more out of focus, but I don't think that's necessary – it's already quite a dynamic picture. I can see, though, that the picture has had quite a lot of sharpening applied to it, and it has unfortunately added a texture to the robin's feathers that make them look a little untidy and not as smooth as you would expect. Worse than that, though, is that some blue bands have appeared, which look a bit like Newton rings. Now I don't think the blue markings really belong in the robin's feathers, though I'm not terribly sure why they are there. Maybe they are meant to be, but I have never seen them before. But whether or not this a scientific fault, the picture has been oversharpened, which is shame. It's a lovely picture, though, and I think it would be worth it if Bill could return to his original image try to produce the picture again but without quite so much sharpening.

'It's a lovely image with a nicely out-of-focus green background'



TOP TIP

When creating adjustments in the Curves window, it is important to ensure the line is a smooth 'S' shape that doesn't double back on itself. A line that kinks will produce unrealistic tones in your image

SEE YOUR
PICTURES
IN PRINT

Enchanted wood Simon Jarvis

Canon EOS 350D, 17-85mm, 1/4sec at f/16, ISO 800

AS ITS TITLE suggests, this picture from Simon is absolutely enchanting. The square cropping and beautiful colours really made it jump out at me from the contact sheet. What I really liked when I first saw this picture were the autumnal greens, yellows and browns in the treeline, and the carpet of brown leaves, punctuated by tree stumps, and all framed by the living trees in the background and on the edges. The picture leads us from the bottom left-hand corner up through the middle of the frame to the bush in the middle on the right-hand side. There's a real sense of where we are going in this picture, and I half expected a hobbit to pop out from behind tree.

Unfortunately, when I loaded the picture up to look at it on screen, I could see that there had been some odd processing applied to it. Simon says that, working from the raw file, he reduced the vibrancy and clarity of the image, and enhanced the colour vibrancy, but I think he's applied more processing than the image can actually cope with. The highlights on the floor and the lighter leaves have gone a silvery grey instead of white. When the picture is small on the contact sheet, we can see the dappled effect of the lighting as it passes through the trees, but when looking at it at full size, it just doesn't look real, and that's a shame because this picture has so much going for it. The leaves on the floor need to look more realistic, and while the lighting in the treeline is beautiful, we could probably go a little bit

darker to reflect the sense of contrast in the real-life scene. While I'm sure Simon has made his changes to reflect his 'Enchanted wood' title, I think we would all be doubly enchanted if we could actually imagine ourselves being there.

The picture is also noisy, but this is not necessarily a bad thing because I think the colour noise could actually add to the colours of the scene in much the same way as an old fast film would have added colour through its own grain or an impressionist painter would have added lots of colour in dots. It gives the image a nice granular texture; it really all comes back to those leaves. They look like goldfish; there's too much orange and pale beige and together they don't compliment this scene at all. Fortunately, Simon shot it in raw so he can always go back and try his hand at it again, but keep that crop, Simon – it's brilliant.

For this image, though, I quickly masked the base of the picture and darkened it off using the Levels tool in order to take the midtones down a bit. I then used Curves to darken it even further, but carefully so as not to add too much contrast and lose the tree stumps. Both the Levels and Curves adjustments have worked on the luminosity. While it's an improvement, it's also a problematic edit because the picture is effectively being split into two parts, and so it looks as though it has been treated with two different processes. What I have not done is not completely convincing, but hopefully it will give Simon a bit of a clue as to what he should be aiming for.

'We could probably go a little darker to reflect the contrast in the real-life scene'

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*as at 30/09/09

AP Testbench

Over the next few pages we present this week's **equipment tests**, **reader questions** and **technique pointers**



Amateur Photographer
Ideal for Micro Four Thirds-system photographers
★★★★★

Orkio 200 Series Urban DSLR Bagz £39.99

For stockists email sales@swains.co.uk or call 0845 450 4242

THE Orkio 200 Series Urban DSLR shoulder bag is built to hold a DSLR body, lens and flashgun, making it ideal for days out and short holidays. I found that I could easily fit a Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1 with an attached 14-140mm f/4-5.8 Mega OIS lens into the bag. I could even fit a Pentax K-7 with 18-55mm kit lens attached, although it did only leave room for either an additional flashgun or lens, not both.

The main compartment has adjustable Velcro dividers to help keep equipment separate, while for storing accessories there is a small pocket on the front, as well as two more pockets on either side of the top flap. For added comfort the bag has an angled strap to make it easier to wear across the chest, as well as a cushioned shoulder pad.

Available in cream/orange, cream/khaki and black/red (pictured), the Orkio 200 Series Urban DSLR shoulder bag is ideal if you have an entry-level or enthusiast DSLR and a small zoom lens. However, if you have a Micro Four Thirds camera you will be able to carry a full complement of camera equipment. **Richard Sibley**

The AP guarantee to you

All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

PermaJet Epson Print Head Cleaning Solution £19.95

www.permajet.com

A CLOGGED inkjet printer head can waste both time and money. Using a printer's head-cleaning procedure can mean using a lot of expensive ink, particularly if it takes many passes to clear the blockage, and sometimes, no matter how many times you perform a head clean, you just cannot shift the clogged ink.

PermaJet's universal head-cleaning solution for Epson printers could save you a lot of time and ink. The kit comprises two bottles of cleaning solution along with two dummy cartridges and a syringe. All you need to do is remove the ink cartridge of the blocked colour, install a dummy cartridge and inject cleaning solution from the syringe. This releases the fluid directly into the ink head. After ten minutes, the fluid is drawn back up into the syringe and the blockage should be cleared.

I tested it using an Epson Stylus Photo R2880 printer and it worked first time. The process was straightforward, if a little fiddly, and although I was concerned that not all the fluid had been sucked up by the syringe, the nozzle check pattern was perfect after I had used the kit.

If you are about to throw out your printer due to badly blocked ink head nozzles, give this kit a try first. It is compatible with the most popular Epson R-series printers, including the R2400, R2880 and R310. For a full list of compatible printers, visit PermaJet's website. **Richard Sibley**



Amateur Photographer
Great for clearing stubborn, blocked ink heads
★★★★★

FORTHCOMING TESTS In the next few months AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

Sony Alpha 450

A stripped-down 14.2-million-pixel DSLR with high continuous shooting and auto HDR at an affordable price.

Samsung NX10

Samsung's new mirrorless interchangeable-lens camera with 14.6 million pixels.

Canon EOS 550D

The 'baby' EOS 7D, with 18 million pixels, an APS-C-sized sensor and Full HD video.

Canon iPF5100

A2 prints using Canon's 12-colour pigment ink system.

Samsung NX10 vs Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF1

Two of the latest mirrorless cameras go head-to-head.

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Photo Rag Satin 310gsm

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A3+, 20 sheets	£68.00
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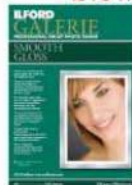
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Nikon D3X vs Sony Alpha 850

Both the **Nikon D3X** and **Sony Alpha 850** have more than 24.5 million pixels, yet the D3X costs around £3,100 more. Richard Sibley finds out what you get for the extra cash

Richard Sibley
Technical Writer



THE old adage so beloved of salesmen – and one that is often used in an attempt to sway you towards buying a more expensive product – is, ‘you get what you pay for’.

In most cases this maxim is correct, but it doesn't take into account the most important factor in a buying decision – the precise *needs* of the purchaser. After all, there's no point buying the world's loudest hi-fi system if you live in a small one-bedroom flat.

The same is true when buying a camera. While I'm sure many readers would love to own the 24.5-million-pixel, full-frame Nikon D3X, it costs around £4,800. Not only is

AT A GLANCE

NIKON D3X

- 24.5 million effective pixels
- Live View on 3in, 920,000-dot LCD screen
- 100% viewfinder
- Street price approximately £4,800

SONY 850

- 24.6 million effective pixels
- 3in, 921,600-dot LCD screen
- Approx 98% viewfinder
- Street price approximately £1,700

this beyond the budget of most enthusiast photographers, but there's also the fact that most enthusiasts are unlikely to use all the features this money buys.

However, there is an alternative. The Sony Alpha 850 has a 24.6-million-pixel, full-frame sensor, yet it has a street price of around £1,700, which is some £3,100 less than the Nikon D3X. In our review, the Sony Alpha 850 scored 81% (AP 9 January), which is 8% less than the 89% we awarded the Nikon D3X (AP 24 January 2009). What is even more intriguing is that the Nikon D3X uses an image sensor, which, although designed by Nikon, is manufactured by Sony. This might lead you to believe that the two sensors share a lot of technology.

The 8% difference in the results of our previous tests show that, on paper, the Nikon D3X is the better of the two cameras. However, are the extra features really worth an extra £3,100 to an enthusiast photographer?

FEATURES

The headline feature of these cameras has to be their high-resolution, full-frame sensors. The

D3X -1.33EV



How the cameras performed in evaluative metering mode varied from scene to scene. Here I had to reduce the exposure time of the D3X image as it was too light, while I had to lighten the shot from the Alpha 850

Alpha 850 +0.3EV



Nikon D3X has a 24.5-million-effective-pixel CMOS sensor, while the Sony Alpha 850 has a slightly more densely packed 24.6-million-effective-pixel CMOS sensor. Interestingly, the output resolution of both cameras is 6048x4032 pixels, making an identical 24,385,536 total pixel output for both cameras.

Nikon USA has openly stated that the sensor in the D3X was manufactured by Sony, but based on a design Nikon developed specifically for the D3X camera. This has led many to believe that the same sensor is used in the Sony Alpha 850, and while it is safe to assume they have much in common, the architecture surrounding the sensor is different. For example, the microlenses that direct light onto the sensor's photosites, the low-pass filter above the sensor array, as well as the analogue-to-digital conversion systems may all be different, and each of these individual components will affect the image quality.

Each manufacturer also has its own image-processing engine. In the D3X, Nikon has fitted its Expeed processing system, while Sony has installed its dual Bionz engine in the Alpha 850. How these different image-processing engines process the data passed on from the sensor will affect image quality. So, even though the two cameras share a similar starting point, the images they produce may be very different.

'When it comes to the main features of both the Alpha 850 and the D3X, there isn't a lot to separate them'

The Sony Alpha 850 is a cut-down version of its big brother, the Alpha 900. One of the main differences between the two Alpha cameras is the continuous shooting rate, which is 5fps with the Alpha 900 and 3fps with the Alpha 850. This is the same as the difference in shooting rate between the Alpha 850 and the Nikon D3X, as the D3X also has a continuous shooting rate of 5fps. Given that neither camera is designed with sports photographers or photojournalists in mind, this shouldn't concern many photographers. With resolutions in excess of 24 million pixels, both the Alpha 850 and D3X are really designed to capture detail in a studio or landscape environment.

With the Nikon D3X costing £3,100 more than the Sony Alpha 850, you'd think that the D3X would be packed full of features not present in the less expensive camera. However, there is one major feature that the Alpha 850 has that the D3X doesn't: in-camera sensor-shift image stabilisation, or SteadyShot Inside as Sony has branded it. Nikon uses lens-based image stabilisation in its cameras, with an increasing number of lenses having VR (Vibration Reduction) built in.

Having image stabilisation built directly into the camera has the advantage that it will work with any lens. Nikon's 24-70mm lens, for example, lacks Vibration Reduction, whereas this isn't a concern with Sony's equivalent 24-70mm f/2.8 ZA SSM

Vario-Sonnar T* lens as the stabilisation is in-camera.

The Alpha 850's sensor-shift image stabilisation offers another advantage over the Nikon D3X – it can also be used as a sensor-cleaning system by vibrating dust away from the sensor. Nikon omitted a sensor-cleaning system from the D3 and D3X, claiming it would have affected the 100% viewfinder coverage.

One feature noticeably absent from the Sony Alpha 850 is Live View, which is surprising considering that it is now found in most cameras, including the Nikon D3X.

When it comes to the main features of both the Alpha 850 and the D3X, there isn't a lot to separate them, and certainly not enough to warrant parting with an extra £3,100. In fact, the sensor-shift image stabilisation of the Alpha 850 and the extra 2-4EV exposure time it allows is arguably a more valuable feature than Live View or an extra 2fps continuous shooting rate.

BUILD AND HANDLING

As you would expect from cameras of this type, both the Nikon D3X and Sony Alpha 850 have magnesium-alloy bodies and are sealed to prevent dust and moisture entering the cameras.

Given their similar specifications, there is a big difference in the size and weight of the cameras. At 850g, the Sony Alpha 850 is the lighter of the two, while the Nikon D3X weighs 1,220g. In a studio the weight of

either camera shouldn't be a problem, but I would obviously prefer to carry the lighter Alpha 850 around my neck when out taking landscape images.

Much of the larger body of the Nikon D3X is taken up by the compartment for its EN-EL4a battery. Physically a lot larger than the NP-FM500H battery used in the Sony Alpha 850, the EN-EL4a allows the D3X to capture many more images under CIPA testing guidelines. Sony states that the Alpha 850's battery can power around 880 images, whereas the D3X's battery allows it to take a whopping 4,400 shots. This may seem like an advantage for Nikon, but if you find that you need to take 4,400 images, buying another four Sony NP-FM500H batteries will cost a lot less than £3,100.

Anyone familiar with DSLRs should have no trouble getting to grips with either camera, but of the two I find that the Nikon D3X is the quicker to use. Its substantially larger body allows it to have a larger LCD on its top plate than the Alpha 850, but also a secondary LCD below the rear screen. This secondary control display is dedicated to controlling the ISO sensitivity, white balance and image quality, and each of these settings has its own dedicated button.

With a smaller camera body, Sony has kept the buttons on the Alpha 850 to a minimum, but it still has dedicated controls for the white balance, ISO sensitivity and drive mode, as well as a dedicated switch to turn the SteadyShot Inside feature on or off. However, the rear screen of the Alpha 850 displays all the currently used shooting settings. Similarly, by pressing the Fn button on the rear of the camera, all these settings become active on the LCD screen and can be easily changed without having to go directly into the camera's main menu system.

If you regularly find yourself using the same image and exposure settings, both cameras have the provision to save these settings and recall them quickly. This is quite straightforward on the Alpha 850: with the camera set up as you want it, simply select 'Memory' from the main menu and choose one of the three memory banks in which to save the settings. Selecting which to use is even easier as all three can be accessed by turning the mode dial on the top of the camera to the relevant 1, 2 or 3 position.

Nikon has used a similar method on the D3X. Four sets of custom menu settings and four lots of shooting menu settings can be saved. These custom presets may then be selected via the main menu. The D3X also has a My Menu function to allow the menu items you most regularly use to be shown on the same menu screen.

Overall, the Nikon D3X has the more comprehensive custom settings features, although using the Alpha 850's mode dial to choose which presets are being used is a very clear and fast way of working.

METERING

Although centreweighted and spot metering suggest an exposure to achieve a mid-grey tone, what one manufacturer considers



mid-grey can be slightly different from another's. In real-life situations I found that the Nikon D3X and Sony Alpha 850 produced almost identical exposures, and when there was a difference it was generally only around 0.3EV.

However, I found there was more of a difference in how the cameras performed in their evaluative metering modes. Rather than simply having a camera average out the brightness of a scene, modern systems work by evaluating the scene as a whole and then working out the correct exposure.

Of the two evaluative metering modes, the D3X's 1,005-segment 3D Colour Matrix is the more sophisticated. It uses the colour, brightness and contrast of a scene, as well as focusing information, to compare it to some 20,000 scenes that are kept in an

internal database. The D3X then uses all this information to determine what it thinks is the optimal exposure.

In practice I found that evaluative metered exposures from the two cameras were quite close, being around 1EV apart at most. Generally, it would seem as though the D3X tries to lighten shadow areas a little more than the Alpha 850, while the Alpha 850 tries to maintain highlight detail.

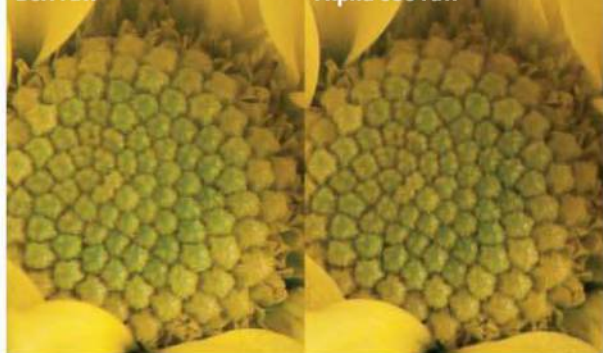
In situations where you wish to tweak the exposure quickly or where a series of images is being captured in the same conditions, the EV compensation button next to the shutter-release button on both cameras comes in handy.

The Nikon D3X has a few more tricks up its sleeve, though. Whereas the Sony Alpha 850 has



D3X raw

Alpha 850 raw



➡ exposure bracketing of up to 2EV, the D3X is capable of up to a 9EV spread across a maximum of nine exposures. This is great when trying to make sure the exposure is exactly right, and it also makes it easy to produce HDR images. However, the Nikon D3X doesn't stop there. Like other professional Nikon DSLR cameras, the D3X features a Fine Tune Optimal Exposure custom option. This allows the user to adjust the metered exposure of each of the centreweighted, spot and evaluative metering modes by as little as 1/6EV. So should you find that the D3X always produces exposures that are a little too dark in spot metering mode, you can adjust the metering to change this.

When the metering systems of both cameras are compared, the Nikon D3X has more options. However in their default settings there is little to separate the exposures of both cameras. There certainly isn't enough of a difference to justify the extra expense of the D3X.

VIEWFINDER, LIVE VIEW AND LCD

Surprisingly, I found that the viewfinder of the Sony Alpha 850 is slightly brighter than that of the Nikon D3X. The Alpha 850 also has a marginally more powerful magnification of 0.74x, compared to 0.7x on the D3X. There is a slight compromise with the Alpha 850 viewfinder as it only offers 98% coverage, compared to the 100% field of view offered by the D3X. I can't envisage this being an issue except in situations where the utmost precision is required.

In a situation where I require a 100% field of view I would usually switch to Live View, but sadly this feature isn't included

Both these raw images were processed in Adobe Camera Raw, with no noise reduction applied, but they were sharpened individually. Both show the same amount of detail, but noise is better controlled in the image taken by the D3X

'It's no real surprise that both the Nikon D3X and Sony Alpha 850 have the same dynamic range'

in the Alpha 850. Given that most other manufacturers include Live View as standard, it does strike me as a little odd that Sony has omitted the feature.

Nikon has implemented Live View in the D3X and you can choose between phase-detection autofocus, which briefly interrupts the view to autofocus, or contrast-detection AF. The latter option is found in the Live View menu as 'Tripod mode', but as it is quite slow to find the focus point it is really only suitable for still-life subjects.

The rear LCD screens of the two cameras measure 3in. Although the Sony Alpha 850 has a slightly higher resolution of 921,600 dots, compared to the 921,000-dot screen of the Nikon D3X, I suspect they are actually of identical resolution and the manufacturers have rounded the numbers either up or down to get the figures for their specifications.

With such high resolutions and magnification options available, it is possible to see a lot of detail when reviewing images on both the Nikon and Sony screens. This is vital in both cameras to help check accurate focus. Overall, both screens are good, being equal to high-resolution 3in screens available on other DSLRs.

There is one other very useful tool that the D3X has and it is one that will be extremely useful for landscape photographers – a Virtual Horizon level. This can be displayed either through the camera's main menu or overlaid on the screen when in Live View mode.

WHITE BALANCE AND COLOUR

I imagine that most people using the Nikon D3X or Sony Alpha 850 will shoot the majority of their images as raw files. While it is easy to adjust the white balance of raw images, it is obviously far easier if you don't have to make the adjustments in the first place.

When in AWB, the D3X uses the same 1005-pixel RGB sensor that is used by the metering system to judge the correct white balance for a given scene. As this system is programmed to recognise particular scenes, such as landscapes, the D3X can recognise a sky and try to adjust the white balance to make it the correct shade of blue.

This is the same system Nikon uses in all its pro-level cameras and it works very well, producing well-balanced colours in almost all situations. I found that under tungsten lighting, midday sunshine and a late afternoon sunset, the automatic white balance produced good results.

The Sony Alpha 850 also produced good results in its AWB mode, although I found that it produced better results when it had to deal with more subtle hues. As Angela Nicholson discovered when she originally reviewed the Sony Alpha 850, the camera has a tendency to overemphasise particularly strong colours in the scene. For example, in one instance a bright blue midday sky caused the image to have a slight blue hue to it.

Obviously there is a wealth of preset white balance settings on

NOISE, RESOLUTION AND SENSITIVITY

Image quality should be the 'meat and potatoes' of any photographer's camera-purchasing decision. With more than 24 million pixels, both the Nikon D3X and Sony Alpha 850 are capable of resolving a lot of detail.

At ISO 100, both cameras reach an impressive 30 on our resolution chart. However, as soon as the sensitivity increases, the differences between the processing systems of the two cameras becomes apparent.

Although our noise test shows that the Alpha 850 has a high percentage of noise in the red channel, the green, blue and luminance channels actually show slightly less noise than the D3X.

Both raw and JPEG files from the Nikon D3X are clear at ISO 400 and ISO 800, but chroma noise has started to creep into images produced by the Alpha 850.

The Sony camera also suffers from luminance noise and a speckled effect is present in raw files, while smudging, which is caused by noise reduction, has affected JPEG images.

In contrast, the level of noise is far better controlled in JPEG files produced by the Nikon D3X, and it is easily reduced in raw images.

Images from the D3X at the maximum ISO 6400 sensitivity have a soft, granular texture, whereas the Alpha 850 images have a clumpier, blotchy texture. Nikon has designated the ISO 3200 and ISO 6400 settings as the extended Hi-1 and Hi-2 sensitivities, meaning they are not recommended for regular use but only if and when needed. I would recommend Alpha 850 owners adopt the same approach.

DYNAMIC RANGE

It is no real surprise that both the Nikon D3X and Sony Alpha 850 have the same dynamic range. However, the fact that the dynamic range is 12EV is quite surprising, given that each sensor has more than 24 million photosites. Usually the smaller photosites required to create these densely populated sensors collect less light, which impacts upon the amount of information that can be recorded. This, in turn, will affect the dynamic range, particularly in darker shadow areas.

Both cameras have dynamic range optimisation systems in the form of Active D-Lighting in the D3X and D-R Optimiser in the Alpha 850. The Nikon D3X has the more subtle of the two systems. At its extra-high setting, Sony's D-R Optimiser creates an effect that looks almost like an HDR image. However, this introduces noise in the shadow areas.



both cameras and it is simple to switch to these, or choose a manual or custom white balance setting should you wish.

However, if you require more refinement, the Nikon D3X has even more options. By selecting white balance in the shooting menu, you can not only choose the white balance setting, but also fine-tune the white balance to adjust the hue of each of the settings slightly.

This level of refinement looks great on a specification sheet. However, I doubt whether too many photographers will ever really get the most out of it or even use this level of control, preferring instead to simply set a custom white balance or adjust raw images.

AUTOFOCUS

Autofocus is one area where the Nikon D3X really comes into its own. It uses the same 51-point AF system (with 15 of these being cross-type sensors) as the Nikon D3S, D700 and D300S, and it has a huge range of settings and custom options.

First of these is the ability to select the number of AF points being used, with 9, 21 or 51 being selectable. All 51 points can be used with Nikon's 3D Matrix tracking system. This uses the same module that is used by the metering and white balance system to track an object around a frame and adjust the focus accordingly.

With the D3S, the 3D Matrix AF is ideal for documentary, sports and wildlife photographers who want to pan the camera and leave the AF to track the subject. Of course, the slower shooting rate of the D3X limits its usefulness for fast-moving sports photography, but for most wildlife subjects it is still usable, as I found out when photographing deer.

Of course, there is always the option to use just one of the 51 AF points and then to use continuous focus mode, but 3D tracking moves with the subject should it move away from that single AF point.

Fancy modes aside, when set to AF-S mode the D3X is fast and responsive, even

in fairly low-light conditions. However, Sony's Alpha 850 is no slouch when it comes to autofocus. It has only nine AF points, which are set in a diamond shape around the middle of the image frame. There are ten additional AF points, but these aren't selectable or visible through the viewfinder. They are instead used internally by the camera to help focus with greater accuracy.

At the centre of the diamond layout the centre AF point is a cross sensor, and as such is more sensitive than the surrounding points. Although the Nikon D3X may outnumber the Sony Alpha 850 when it comes to AF points, I found that the 850 quickly locks on to focus, although the centre point is noticeably faster than the surrounding ones.

For the most part I'd recommend that photographers use the Sony Alpha 850 set to the Local Area AF setting. This allows any one of the main nine AF points to be quickly selected via the rear thumb control, which I found fast and easy to use.

I was a little surprised to see that EyeStart AF hasn't been included in the Sony Alpha 850. EyeStart uses two sensors below the viewfinder to activate the AF as soon as the camera is moved towards your eye. I find it useful on Sony Alpha cameras when taking quick snapshots, but on the whole I can live without it because whenever the viewfinder knocked against me while I was walking, the EyeStart activated the AF and drained the batteries. However, the sensors are still in place on the Alpha 850, but this time they are used to turn the rear LCD off as soon as your eye (or anything else) is placed near the viewfinder, actually saving a little battery life. I just wonder whether Sony couldn't have left the feature in, but left it turned off by default.

While the Nikon clearly has the better AF system, few photographers will ever really get the most out of it because fast, continuous AF tracking speed is quite low down on the requirements for the studio, landscape or candid photographer. Therefore, it would be difficult for an enthusiast to justify the extra money the Nikon D3X commands over the Sony Alpha 850. **AP**

Verdict

LET'S get the facts out of the way first: the Nikon D3X is a truly great camera with many advanced features that will impress both the amateur and professional photographer alike. However, the point of testing the D3X and Sony Alpha 850 side by side isn't to ascertain the superiority of one over the other, but to see whether the Nikon D3X's 'better' features are worthy of the extra £3,100 the camera costs.

Nikon has aimed the D3X squarely at professional photographers and those working for picture agencies, who may already use the Nikon system and will find it easier to justify the cost of the camera. Sony is positioning the Alpha 850 at a different market. By introducing a less sophisticated but far cheaper camera, Sony is trying to tempt new enthusiast photographers to the Alpha system, and in turn take a share of the DSLR market away from Nikon and Canon. In many ways the Alpha 850 is aimed at the same photographers as the similarly priced full-frame Nikon D700 camera, which has just half the number of pixels.

With this in mind, the Sony Alpha 850 is a perfectly acceptable alternative to the Nikon D3X. It may lack the sophisticated AF and custom options, but it is a smaller, lighter camera that in most general situations can match the D3X in terms of performance and image quality.

Instead of asking whether the Nikon D3X is worth an extra £3,100, perhaps another approach would be to ask if the Sony Alpha 850 represents good value for money. And the answer to this question has to be yes. The Alpha 850 offers a high-resolution, full-frame DSLR camera at an affordable price, and it is a great upgrade for users lower down in the Alpha range. Enthusiast photographers using the Alpha 850 for landscapes, studio and travel photography should be more than happy with the image quality the camera offers, without going to the expense of the Nikon D3X.

NIKON D3X

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Amateur Photographer Tested as PROFESSIONAL DSLR Rated VERY GOOD										
89%										
FEATURES	8/10									
NOISE/RESOLUTION	28/30									
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10									
LCD/VIDEO	9/10									
BUILD/HANDLING	9/10									
AUTOFOCUS	9/10									
METERING	9/10									
AWB/COLOUR	8/10									

SONY ALPHA 850

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Amateur Photographer Tested as SEMI-PRO DSLR Rated VERY GOOD										
81%										
FEATURES	7/10									
NOISE/RESOLUTION	28/30									
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10									
LCD/VIDEO	7/10									
BUILD/HANDLING	8/10									
AUTOFOCUS	7/10									
METERING	8/10									
AWB/COLOUR	7/10									

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SENSOR SIZES

Q In his FAQ on the benefits of full frame-sensors (Q&A, AP 30 January), Ian Farrell states: 'With a bigger original you don't have to enlarge it as many times to get a print.' What complete tosh! Comparing, as Ian does, the Nikon D300S and D700, 12 million pixels is 12 million pixels. The size of the sensor sites doesn't change how many pixels per inch there are on a print, as both cameras give an identical number of pixels per inch on the same size print if they've captured the same image. **Paul Linford**

A You are correct in stating that moving from the cropped-sensor Nikon D300S to a full-frame D700 doesn't change the size or resolution of the final print.

There are size advantages when it comes to digital camera chips, however, and it's important not to confuse pixels (which exist in pictures and on-screen) with photosites (light-gathering wells). The two correspond, but aren't the same – as photosites can vary in size.

When a chip gets larger, manufacturers can put more photosites on the surface or make the photosites bigger – or both. Including more photosites yields larger files and helps with resolution, but making them physically bigger also improves image quality. If one thinks of the way a photosite collects light in the same

way a bucket collects rainwater, a larger photosite collects more light, making it more sensitive. This helps with noise, dynamic range, and even colour and tonal accuracy, as well as enabling the use of high ISO settings.

When it comes to the Nikon D300 (which preceded the D300S) and D700, the D300's photosites measure 5.5 microns while the D700's measure 8.45 microns. In contrast, the sensor of 12-million-pixel Four Thirds cameras, like Panasonic's Lumix DMC-G1, have photosites of 4.5 microns.

The choice of sensor still very much depends on the type of photography you prefer, as Angela Nicholson concluded in her article on APS-C format vs full frame (AP 6 March).

Ian Farrell

ASK...

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Silverprint or Liquid Liquid emulsion stick to the surface properly but doesn't react adversely with it, the developer or the fixer.

Ian Farrell

EASY READING

I sympathise with M Marston (Q&A, AP 16 January) and his problem with reading photo files in his camera. While the answer (don't change anything in the file) is correct, there are other possible causes. The first concerns the use of Windows Ready Boost. This is an option in Windows Vista that uses a fast flash drive to augment the computer's internal memory. However, once turned on, it reserves an area of memory in any flash drive attached to the computer (including memory cards), and unless the drive is reformatted, that area remains unusable by any other application.

The second cause occurs simply by inserting the card into the slot on a desktop printer. This creates a file with the printer data in it that is subsequently not recognised by the camera. Because there is an unrecognised file on the card, the camera refuses to read any files until it has been deleted. Even then, deleting it isn't good enough. In my case, I had to use the computer to fill the card with 'camera' photo files to ensure that all fragments of that file had been overridden and then reformat before the camera could once again use that card.

The answer is that memory cards intended for use in the camera should be reserved for that purpose.

Robert J Maddison

YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

Q I read Matt Golowczynski's comment about filters (AP 28 November 2009). Is he saying that it is worth buying expensive filters? I have been told by Jessops that Hoya makes all its filters. **Marc Robinson**

A You do get what you pay for with filters, Marc. The optical quality of filters from manufacturers like B+W and Lee are second to none, but they are sometimes prohibitively expensive, which is where the more affordable (and still perfectly good) brands come in. Big differences are often noticed in polarising filters, with inexpensive ones sometimes giving a nasty-looking colour cast and muddy saturation.

I've no reason to doubt Jessops if it says that Hoya makes its filters, and I'm sure Jessops filters perform well in their price bracket, but Hoya makes various grades of filter itself, ranging from the premium professional models to an enthusiast range.

My advice would be to buy the best you can afford at the time. **Ian Farrell**



SEALANT SOLUTION

Q I'm in Lisbon, Portugal, where my friend Camilla Watson has just finished the most stunning exhibition in which she printed photos of all her neighbours in the old quarter of Mouraria on the walls of their houses. She used Silverprint and Liquid Light emulsion, and lots of sweat, tears and experimentation.

She is now printing some of these photos onto marble tiles, but is having problems because they are so absorbent and difficult to fix and wash properly. Certain stains develop that neither of us can identify. Do you have any idea what might be causing this? **Brian Astbury**

A It is rather specialist, Brian. Geoffrey Crawley and I have both wracked our brains over this one, and the only course of action we can suggest is to explore coating the surface of the marble with some form of sealant so the chemicals do not leach into it. From my days in the darkroom I seem to remember that badly washed prints containing residual fixer could be susceptible to dichroic fog – your friend might be experiencing the same phenomenon. Either that or chemicals absorbed by the marble over the years are leaching out and staining the image.

Experiment with different sealants to ensure the one you choose lets the



BATTERY CORRECTION

Q In your test of the Canon EOS 7D (AP 7 November 2009), it was stated that the camera ran on BP511A batteries. Canon tells me this is incorrect and the 7D battery is the LP E6.

Although it was a great review, as always, it was misleading for an EOS 40D user selling his camera with two spare BP511A batteries. I nearly kept them to use in the EOS 7D and that would have been pretty useless. **John Elmitt**

A John, the Canon EOS 7D does indeed use a different battery type – the LP E6. Apologies for any confusion caused. **Angela Nicholson**



FROM THE AP FORUM

Copy – rights query

Mr_P asks Recently I took some photos at the UK Stallion Expo in Bedfordshire. I have been contacted by the organiser of the event, asking about the possibility of buying the copyright to a number of images. They would be used initially for the company website and magazine advertising. I suppose he'd also be considering selling prints via his website to the horse owners and the people who attended. I have no idea what kind of money to ask for. Additionally, through various online breeding forums, I have been contacted directly by the horse owners about buying prints, so I need help with this as well.

Fen replies If you sell your copyright of the photos, you won't be able to sell copies to other people. My advice would be to sell 'use of photos' to the company.

Mr_P replies I realise that if I sell the copyright I wouldn't be able to sell prints, but I'm trying to weigh up what would be more beneficial: retain the copyright and sell prints myself, or sell the copyright and increase the chance that I'll get repeat business. I'm really just starting out, so the fact that this guy is talking about copyright is quite flattering.

Ian Farrell replies My advice is never to sell your copyright. Instead, sell the event organiser a perpetual licence to use the images in any way he wants. You could make this exclusive (meaning nobody else gets them), but as you want to sell prints too I'd leave this out. Then you can sell prints to any riders who approach you.

It is flattering to get this kind of attention when you are starting out, but selling the copyright to your images is a bad business decision in my book.

www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

f/AQ

Managing workflow

Thanks to the blaze of publicity surrounding the recent arrival of Apple's iPad you could be forgiven for missing the accompanying launch of Aperture 3, the most recent version of the company's raw workflow software for photographers. The new features of the software are geared towards enthusiast photographers, and Apple is clearly trying hard to convert users of iPhoto (the photo-editing application that comes with all Macs) to the more professional Aperture. So, how will Aperture benefit us?

Workflow is now as important to the enthusiast as it is to the professional, as we shoot many more pictures these days, and keeping track of them can be a nightmare if we're not organised. This needn't be complicated; a regimented set of folders and sub folders on your hard disk is all that's needed – and the willpower to stick to it.

Applications such as Aperture, and Lightroom are a godsend for those without natural organisational skills. They not only process your raw files, but also catalogue them, making them searchable by keyword, location, time of capture and, with Aperture 3, even face recognition.

I cringe when I see images saved as 'untitled7.jpg' in folders called 'pics', because unless you can find an image to share, print or otherwise show off with, you are not getting the most from your hobby. So, have a good look at your workflow – is it as good as it could be? (Turn to page 62 to read Richard Sibley's four-page test of this latest version of Aperture.)

In next week's AP

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Paul Whiting looks at exploring angles and viewpoints to create unique images

Apple Aperture 3



The latest version of Apple's photo catalogue and raw-editing software costs £169 and has over 200 new features. **Richard Sibley** looks at how far **Aperture 3** goes to offer Mac users a real alternative to Adobe Photoshop Lightroom



APPLE Mac computers were, for a long time, the preserve of designers and publishing houses. However, the advent of the iPod and iPhone have helped raise Apple's profile and now more and more consumers, including photographers, are switching from Windows to Mac computers.

One of the main concerns we hear on our forums (www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/forums) about switching from a Windows to a Mac system is what software is available.

The new Face Recognition system makes it easy to organise images of specific people

Thankfully, all of Adobe's Photoshop range of products, including Elements and Lightroom, are available for Mac computers.

However, with Apple liking to provide complete software solutions to accompany its computers, it has created Aperture, an image management and raw-editing software program. Designed solely to run on Apple computers, it was first released in November 2005 – more than a year before Adobe introduced Photoshop Lightroom in January 2007, and it became popular amongst professional photographers who use Mac computers.

The second version of Aperture was released in February 2008 and, although it had a range of new features, it didn't seem to have the image-editing power of Adobe

Photoshop Lightroom 2. We reviewed Aperture 2 in AP 2 August 2008, where it received four stars out of five.

The latest version, Aperture 3, boasts over 200 new features, including face recognition, brush tools and new image adjustments. For the first time Aperture also allows videos to be added to the library, and the software takes advantage of the latest 64-bit processing technology.

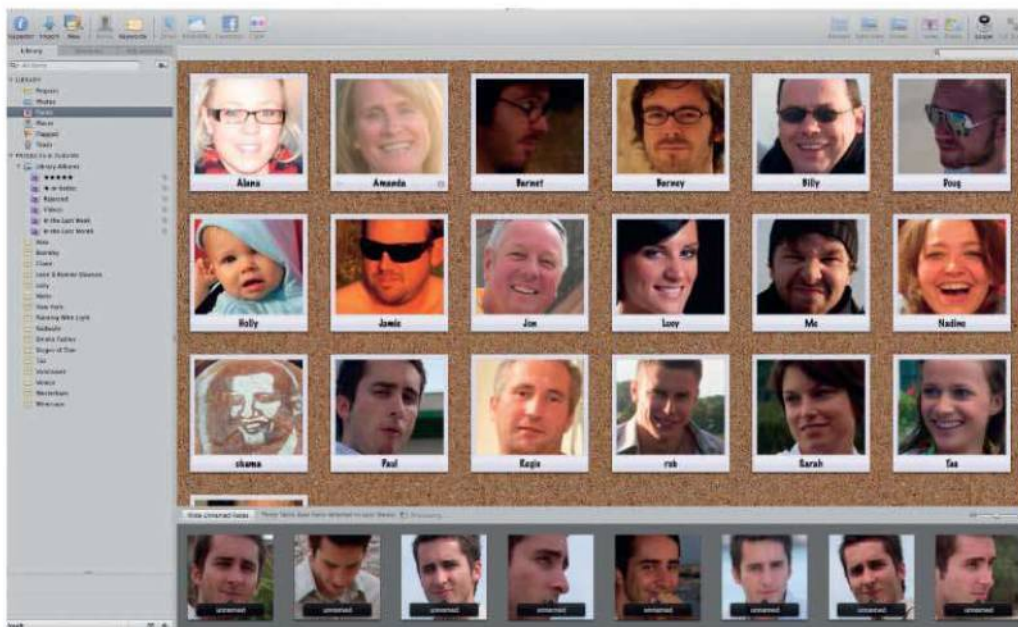
With this comprehensive list of new features, Aperture 3 is more than just a tidy up and refresh of an old program, and I was eager to see whether it might be able to sway many current Lightroom/Mac users into making the switch.

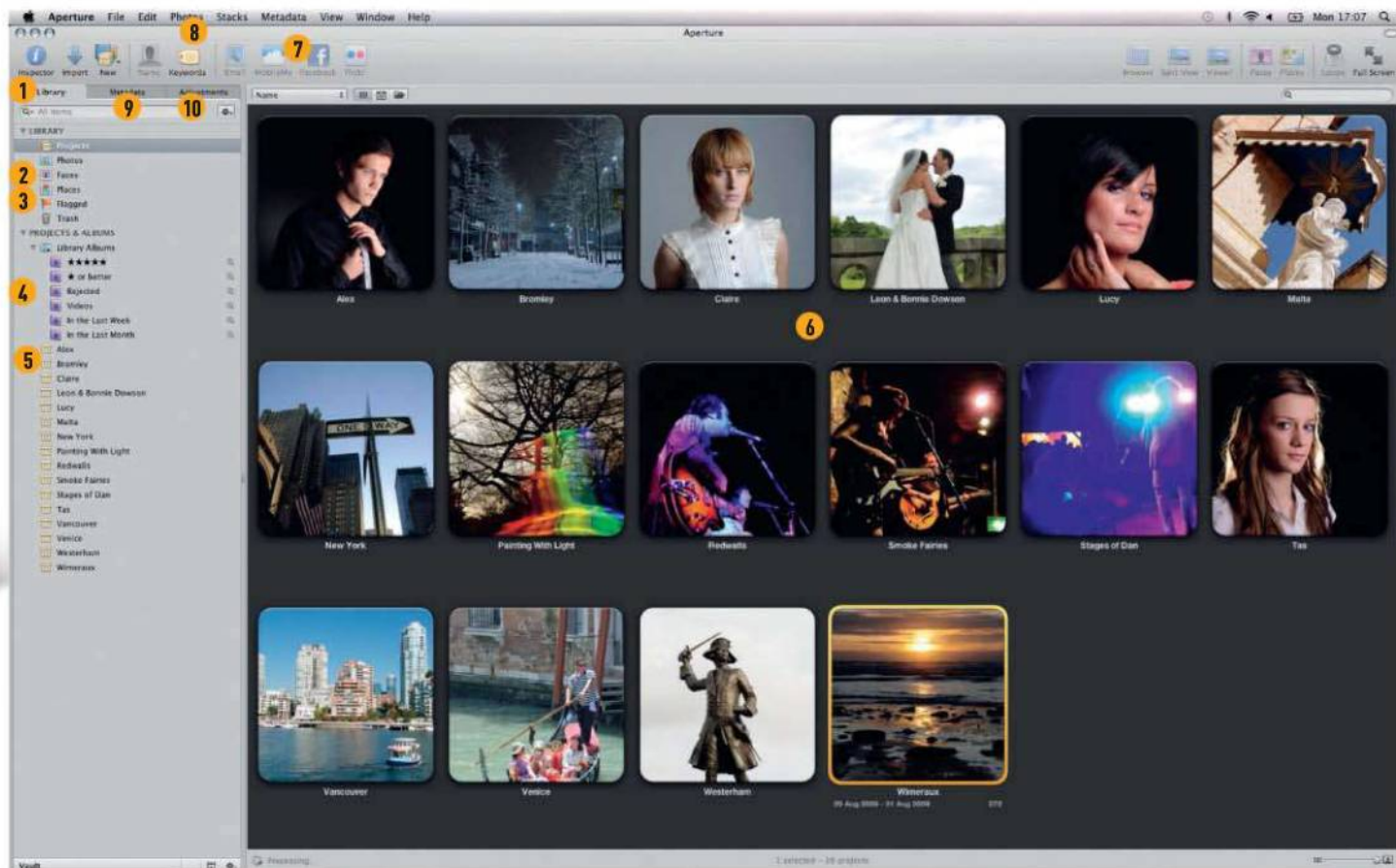
NEW FEATURES

The fact that the latest version of Aperture looks like a grown-up version of Apple iPhoto (which comes pre-installed on most Mac computers) is quite deliberate. Apple has designed Aperture with iPhoto users in mind, making it as smooth as possible for photographers to upgrade. As you would expect, iPhoto data can be imported automatically, so if you have an existing iPhoto library you needn't worry about having to start again from scratch.

Of the 200-plus new features, most are small tweaks intended to make it easier for the photographer to navigate and use the software. However, one major amendment to how the software works is in the introduction of the Full-Screen Browser when using the main project viewing window. By simply pressing the F key, the screen is cleared of all toolbars and panels, and the simple display shows only the project or image thumbnails against a black background.

I found the full screen mode great for maximising the amount of usable screen





MAIN APERTURE 3 WORKSPACE

MANY mac users will be familiar with iPhoto, Apple's consumer image management and basic editing software, as it comes pre-installed on most Mac computers. Apple has tried to make the move from iPhoto to Aperture as simple as possible and, as such, much of the layout of Aperture 3 is based around iPhoto. In fact, some of the new features of Aperture 3 were introduced with the last version of iPhoto 09.

1 LIBRARY, PROJECTS AND ALBUMS

The Library panel contains all the various methods by which images can be arranged. The most basic of these is Projects, through which you can import a series of images

and organise them into a new or existing project.

2 FACES

Face recognition can also be used to tag people in images. To see the various people in your Library, select Faces.

3 PLACES

Images can be sorted by their location using GPS data or selecting a point on Google Maps.

4 SMART ALBUMS

Like Smart Playlists in iTunes, these consist of images that are automatically organised into an album. For example, to see all the images you have rated 'five stars', select 'five stars' album. Every time you give an image five stars it will automatically be added to this album.

Similarly, Smart Albums can be created by date, so that all the photos you took in 2008 can be compiled together.

5 PROJECTS

A list of all of your photo projects.

6 MAIN WINDOW

This area is used to display the current selection. For example, if you have selected Projects, thumbnails of all the projects are displayed in this window. If you move the cursor across a thumbnail it changes, which quickly allows you to see all of the images in that project. If you click on a project, this main window will show all of the individual photos.

7 EXPORT

Aperture 3 supports the export of images via email, and it allows them to

be published to Facebook, Flickr and Apple's MobileMe service.

8 KEYWORDS

When open, the Keywords panel allows new keywords to be added to the Library collection. They can then be dragged and dropped onto an image to add them to the image data. Alternatively, Keywords can be typed into an image's metadata.

9 METADATA PANEL

The left-hand panel can also be used to display image metadata.

10 ADJUSTMENTS PANEL

All of the image adjustments can be found in the left-hand panel, making it quick and easy to use sliders to edit an image.

space. When editing images, it is extremely useful, and it offers more space and takes less setting up than the equivalent Lightroom 2 feature.

FACE RECOGNITION

Another feature that iPhoto users will recognise is the face-recognition tool, Faces. An Apple representative told me

that Aperture 3 uses exactly the same recognition engine as iPhoto; as such, it will be prone to the odd mistake, such as seeing a face in amongst nothing but a clump of rocks, but on the whole it works extremely well.

Once it has detected a face, the program asks you to name the person in the image. When each person has a few images

attributed to them, Aperture 3 can begin to recognise the person; instead of asking you who it is, the program will make suggestions as to who it thinks the person is. Clicking on a person's thumbnail shows all the images in which they have been tagged. Below the confirmed images is a line, and below this are shown all the images that Aperture 3

thinks also include this person. To confirm any of its suggestions the images just have to be dragged, either individually or en masse, over to the confirmed side of the line.

The system works in a very similar manner to the way in which Photoshop Elements 8 deals with face recognition and people tags.

GPS TAGGING

Again a feature of iPhoto, and also included in Photoshop Elements 8 and Lightroom 2, Aperture 3 has the ability to geo-tag images. If the pictures have GPS data contained within them, this is automatically read and the image is then added to an interactive version of Google Maps, which is found directly in Aperture.

Better still, Apple has created a database of locations so that the image can be automatically tagged with a place name or area of interest. If there isn't any GPS data in the image, you can simply perform a search for the place on the map. This will search not only Apple's database but Google's, and the map will then move to the selected location, where you can place a pin on the exact spot the image was taken.

Apple has also taken this application a step further, and if you have a GPS logger that isn't attached to the camera with you when out taking photos, then you can load the information from the log file into Aperture 3. This can be combined with photos in a project to show exactly when and where they were taken.

I had a lot of fun going through my images of Vancouver from last summer and adding map pins to the points at which individual photos were taken. Although the places are fresh in my mind now, it will be great in the future or on a return trip to be able to go back and take more photos at these locations that may otherwise be forgotten.

IMAGE EDITING

Aperture 3 boasts 22 image-adjustment features, ranging from basic white balance



Aperture 3 enables you to geotag images simply by dragging them onto the map image

In this image I have used the Polarise tool and painted the effect onto the sky. The Detect Edges feature means it is only applied to the sky, and not the buildings

and levels adjustments to a new polarising effect and chromatic aberration reduction. These adjustment controls are displayed in the inspector window, and can be used either as a floating palette or fixed to a position on the left-hand side of the screen.

Any adjustments that are made are non-destructive, just like in Adobe Lightroom. This means that any changes you make are saved in the library as a series of instructions about how the image has been altered. The original file remains completely untouched and the adjustments are only applied when the image is exported.

The same is true when making duplicate copies of images. These pictures only exist within Aperture and are not digital files on your hard disk. Only when they are exported are they actually created, which means you can create multiple versions of the same image and not find yourself running out of hard disk space.

BRUSHES

Probably the biggest change to the way images are edited in Aperture is the addition of brushes to this third version. Of the 22 adjustments possible in this program, 14 can be brushed on or off an image. For example, if you want the sky in a landscape image to look like it has been polarised, simply use the Polarised adjustment and paint the effect onto the sky.

The size, strength and softness of the brushes can all be adjusted to help paint the effects on, but Apple has again gone one step further by adding a Detect Edges option. This will detect the edges in an image while a Brush tool is being used. So, for example, you can use it to paint the polarise effect onto a sky and happily paint around the edges of buildings. As long as no more than half the brush goes over the edge of the building, the effect won't be applied further than the edge where the building meets the sky. As a result, you'll get a nice blue sky without affecting the building.

Using the Brush tool to dodge and burn, or adjust the colour or contrast of a particular area, is great and works well. Apple has ensured that the facility is compatible with graphics tablets so that you can be very precise. The addition of the Detect Edges option makes editing skies and backgrounds very easy.

It doesn't get the edge correct 100% of the time, but for those odd, awkward edges, you can simply zoom in to 100% and use a smaller brush to make the changes. In fact, the Detect Edges option works even better with a smaller brush in 100% view.

With a Skin Retouch brush and a Spot and Patch tool, there is a great deal that can be done from within Aperture 3, without having to use an external editor like Photoshop.

EXPORT

Of course, once you have finished editing the images you will want to show them to the world. Those with iPhones or iPods can select the images to be exported and





resized at the exact size to fit the devices' screens.

If you prefer to show the images online, you can set up Aperture 3 to work with your Facebook or Flickr account, so that all of your holiday photos can be exported in one go. However, if you want to create your own website, even this is possible from within the software. There are a few basic website gallery themes to choose from, and you have the option to add different text and pictures. From here you can upload your site to your web host's FTP server.

Slideshow creation has also been given a makeover in this new version of Aperture. In fact, the slideshow feature is now more akin to how images are handled in video-editing software. The images selected for the slideshow are shown at the bottom of the screen in the order they are to be shown; titles can be added along with transitions between slides. Images can also be panned over a period of time, in the same way that illustrations from children's books are shown when the books are read on TV. This technique is known in the film industry as the Ken Burns effect, after the documentary filmmaker who popularised the technique of zooming in and panning still images in films.

Even video clips and audio files can be used in the slideshow. In fact, with three audio tracks available you can include a background music soundtrack, some ambient sounds and even a commentary. The slideshow function is very sleek and easy to use, and once you have finished your masterpiece it can be exported to an iPhone, iPod, DVD or the web.

BOOK PUBLISHING

The past few years have seen ever more people creating books of their images. Aperture 3 comes fully equipped to help produce your own photo book. There are templates that can be used to help you lay out the book, but each one is fully editable, allowing you to change the position of text and images. This alone makes it easy to produce professional-looking, sleek book designs.

However, there are other features that really make Aperture 3 stand out. One example is that, if you are aiming to document a particular holiday, place or journey in your photo book, the software allows you to include vector maps.

Once designed, printed books can now be purchased from Apple, with the whole design process and transaction taking place from within Aperture 3. If you already have an iTunes account, there is no need to set up another to make a purchase.

In the United States, Apple already has third-party book manufacturers producing their own book templates for use within Aperture 3 and, again, once you have set up an account with the third-party publisher, the whole process can be handled without ever having to leave the image-editing software. When I spoke to Apple about its plans to bring this third-party service to the UK, the company said it hoped to have third-party book manufacturers in place shortly. Until then, books can be exported as PDF files so that you can find your own printer for your masterpiece. **AP**

Verdict

WHILE I was impressed with the previous version of Aperture, I feel that this third version really could offer Photoshop Lightroom some stiff competition, but only on Apple Mac computers, obviously. Aperture 3 is a lot sleeker and less cluttered than Lightroom, although it may take a little getting used to the location of all the various features. The addition of the new brush adjustments is a real benefit and, usually, it will mean that you don't have to edit an image in a third-party image editor, such as Photoshop.

What Apple has created fits in with Steve Job's famous 'it just works' philosophy. Aperture 3 allows you to take the image, adjust and edit it and then show it to people in a number of different ways. While Lightroom obviously does this as well, after using Aperture 3 the Adobe software just seems clunkier and lacking in finesse, particularly when it comes to slideshow, book and website creation.

Aperture 3 costs £169 but there is a 30-day free trial available (go to www.apple.com/uk), and I'd suggest Mac users, especially those who use iPhoto, download it and give it a try.



System requirements

Intel-based Apple Mac computer with OS X 10.5.8 (Leopard) or 10.6.2 (Snow Leopard) or later, 1GB of RAM, 2GB for a Mac Pro, DVD drive for installation, 1GB of disk space for application and documentation



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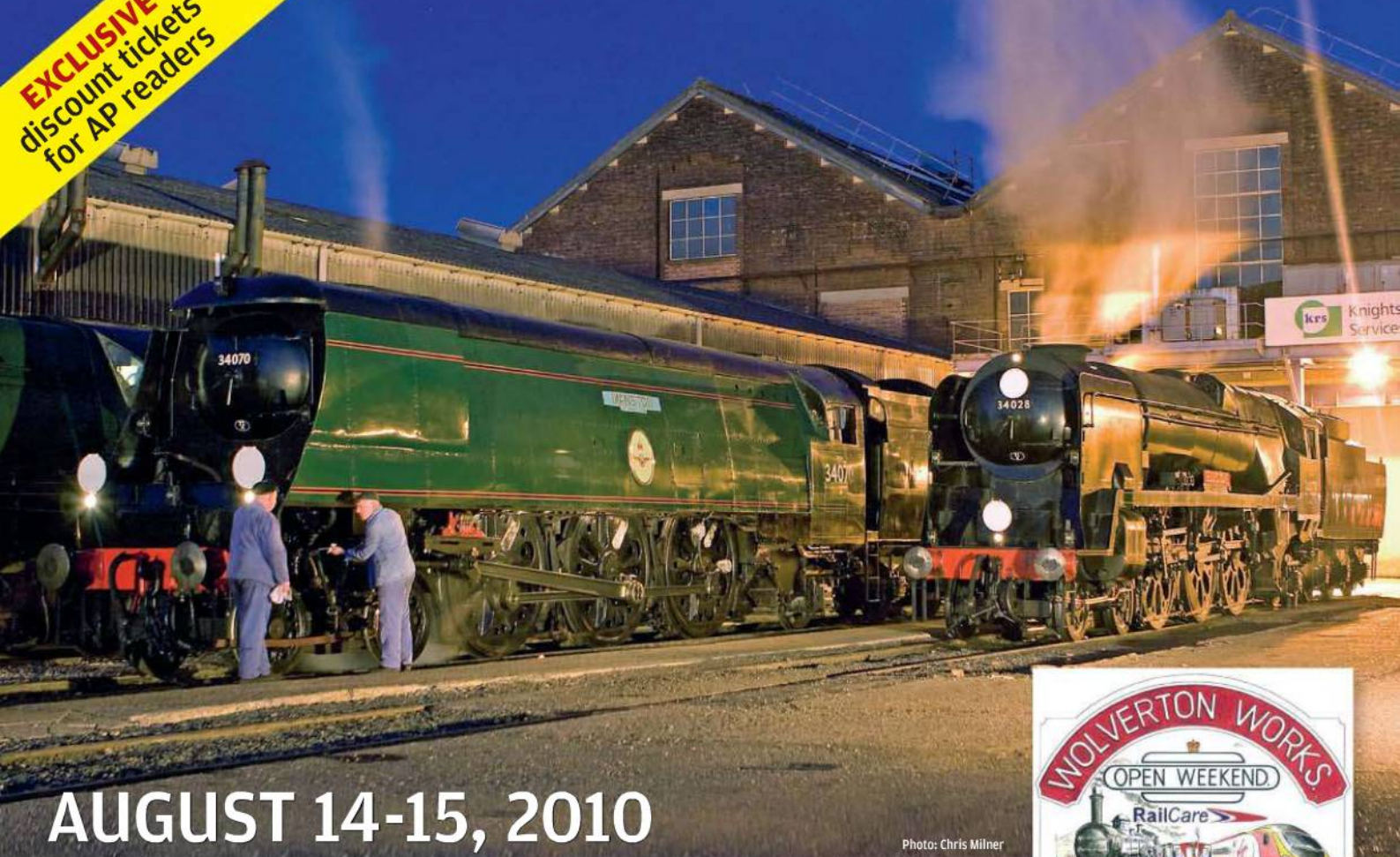


Photo: Chris Milner



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AP explains...

Tilt-and-shift lenses

Whether it's for getting it right in camera or getting creative, **Matt Golowczynski** explains the benefits of tilt-and-shift lenses

IN LENSES for normal applications, the central plane of the front glass element sits perfectly parallel with the image-recording plane – the film or the digital sensor. The reason for this is quite simple; if it did not the lens would not be able to produce a focused image across the picture area. It is the consistent distance between that element and the film/sensor that ensures that the resultant picture will be sharp from edge to edge. This parallel alignment has been a cornerstone rule of lens construction – as is the rule that states the centre of the front element must be aligned with the centre of the imaging area.

There are some lenses, though, that make a point of breaking these rules to cope with specialist photographic situations and applications. These lenses are called tilt-and-shift lenses, or perspective control lenses, and are most often used by architectural and still-life photographers to correct the

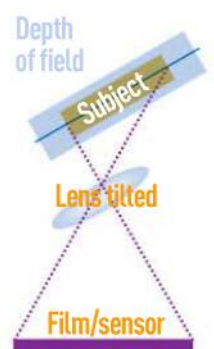
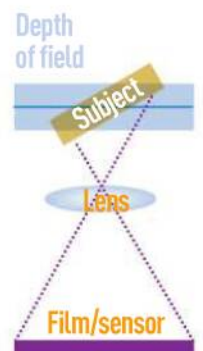
distortions caused by their viewing angles on subject matter that needs to be shown with straight, parallel and square edges.

A tilt-and-shift lens has a front group of elements that can be tilted at an angle to the centre line (the axis) of the lens, and which can be moved up, down or side to side while remaining parallel to the film plane. Tilting the front group creates a plane of focus at an angle to the film, while shifting the front group lifts or lowers the image circle within the viewfinder – so the subject rises or falls in the picture.

The most obvious example of a situation in which these lenses might be used comes when we are photographing a tall building from a relatively short distance – we have to look up to ensure the top of the building will be in the picture. When we do that, however, the edges of the building will slope inwards (converging verticals) as it becomes higher. This happens because we are looking up,

but more importantly because the film plane of the camera is also angled upwards. But when we set the camera back to the level – parallel with the ground – we are unable to fit the top of the building in the frame however parallel the building's sides are. An upwards shift of the front element group allows the lens to take a higher viewpoint that will capture the top of the building without the film plane, or camera, being angled upwards. So, the result is that the building appears complete and straight in the final image.

Tilting the lens becomes useful when we want to control the plane of focus in a scene. A train track disappearing into the distance will only be sharp in the area in which we have focused, because the track is travelling at an acute angle to the focus plane of the lens. But if we can angle the front of the lens downwards, so the lens plane is closer to the angle of the tracks, the plane of focus will be more closely aligned with the subject – and thus more of the track will appear sharp. For landscape photographers, this presents an effective method for extending depth of field in a scene that requires close and distant objects to be focused.



Depth of field scale

Focusing ring

Aperture ring

Tilt ring

Turning this ring changes the lens's angle of tilt in relation to the camera

Rotation lever

Depressing this allow the lens to be rotated

Shifting ring

Turning this ring allows the imaging circle of the lens to be shifted around the film or sensor

THE SCIENCE

ONE THING all tilt-and-shift lenses have in common is their high price, part of which may be explained by their complicated construction. The necessary mechanical considerations of their movable parts add to the time and effort involved in their manufacture, and the scale on which they are made is far smaller than for normal lenses. Additionally, in order to provide even illumination regardless of the position in which it is angled, such lenses require relatively large image circles; otherwise, vignetting, or fall-off, will be likely to occur. The diameter of the image circle required for a conventional lens mounted on a full-frame body is 43mm, but tilt-and-shift lenses traditionally offer closer to 57mm. More recent optics have increased this to around 67mm, which in turn allows for the amount of movement to be increased.

Their cost also recognises the high optical standard to which such lenses are built. The susceptibility of wideangle lenses to curvilinear distortions and chromatic aberration requires elements with aspherical profiles and low dispersive properties to help maintain high standards (Nikon's 24mm f/3.5D ED PC-E Nikkor optic includes no less than three aspherical and three ED elements within its construction). Lens coatings are also vital for helping suppress ghosting and flare, given the oblique angles from which image-forming light will enter the front element. Both Canon and Nikon have used nanotechnology to develop coatings that gradually change the refractive index of the lens surface

Above is a diagram of the anatomy of a tilt-and-shift lens. The extra mechanical considerations mean that more time and effort must be put into their manufacture. It is this cost that makes them so expensive to buy

from centre to edge, rather than creating a single, defined boundary between air and glass. The result is a higher ratio of transmitted to reflected light, minimising both flare and dispersion, and improving contrast.

Historically, a number of companies have produced lenses for a variety of mounts, though not all have been capable of both tilting and shifting. The Nikkor PC 35mm f/3.5, released in 1962, was the first interchangeable lens designed for an SLR with some form of perspective control. It was followed in preceding years by optics from Olympus, Canon and Pentax, among others, for their own systems. Today, with most photographer's tied to their systems, only Canon and Nikon (from the major manufacturers) continue to offer such lenses.

Given the different applications for which they can be used, both companies offer tilt-and-shift lenses in a variety of fixed focal lengths, between them carrying seven models that cover a focal range of 17 to 90mm. Those using other 35mm-based systems can take advantage of Hartblei's Super-Rotator series, originally designed for medium-format cameras but adapted to fit a number of common DSLR mounts. Users of other systems may also use the few legacy lenses produced to fit their mount, though given the scale of their manufacture many can be difficult to find. Also, as with many other older lenses, performance is not entirely predictable on digital bodies. Not all lenses offered multicoated elements, for example, and so were known to be prone to flare and ghosting.



Unshifted



Shifted

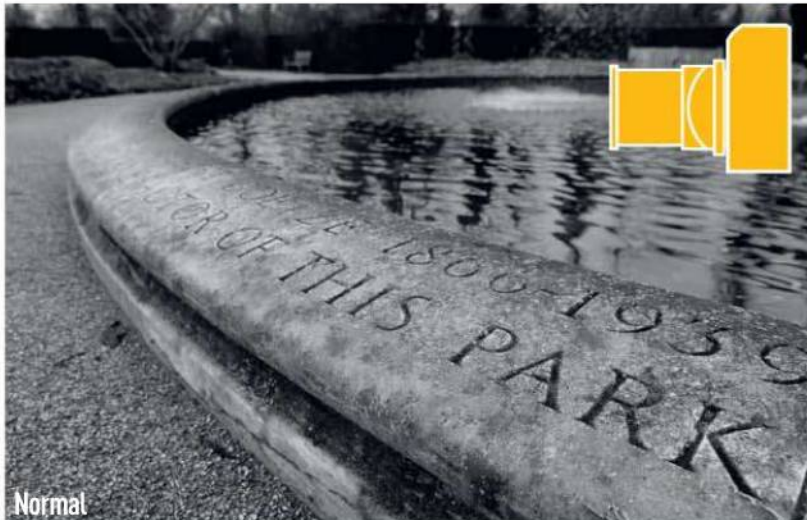
Rotating the lens by 90° and shifting the lens in an upwards direction by 4mm allowed the converging verticals in this image to be corrected

IN USE

As intimidating as it may appear, a tilt-and-shift lens is not difficult to use, but an understanding of how its use affects an image and its limitations is nevertheless necessary. Before Canon introduced the TS-E 90mm f/2.8 with electromagnetic diaphragm control in 1991, tilt-and-shift lenses, like others, required an aperture ring. The 'E' designation attached to both Canon's TS-E and Nikon's PC-E lenses denotes this functionality; earlier Nikon lenses were simply titled 'PC' – though Nikon's PC-E lenses can only be operated in this way with a few of its more recent DSLRs. As such, and for the convenience of simply having one, aperture rings have been retained on modern tilt-and-shift lenses.

Such optics do not have autofocus systems, and usually need to be set in their default position for the camera to obtain an accurate meter reading. The reason is that a metering sensor assumes the light is exiting the lens straight on, so when this isn't the case the reading is likely to be inaccurate.

Both of these issues are, however, made somewhat easier by the Live View function



While both images were captured at a relatively wide aperture of $f/4$, tilting the lens towards the pond allowed depth of field to be increased in this image

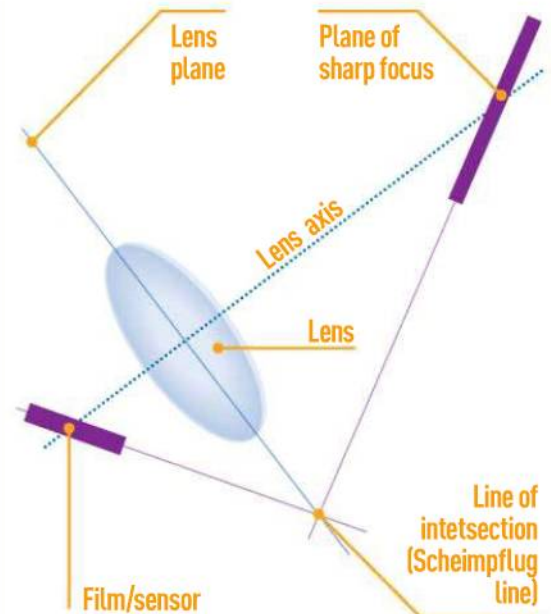
of DSLRs. As well as allowing focus and depth of field to be easily assessed on a larger display, the majority of such systems also allow a virtual grid to be placed over the scene, which can make light work of checking the straightness of linear details. Cameras without the provision of Live View benefit from an appropriate focusing screen to perform the same task. Furthermore, as metering in Live View is performed by the main image sensor rather than the dedicated one, a live histogram may be used as a reference to exposure while the image is being composed, regardless of whether the lens has been adjusted.

The relationship between the tilt-and-shift controls can differ between models. Most lenses that offer both these functions have them fixed at a 90° angle to each other, meaning that tilt and shift can only be applied over opposing directions. In some cases it is possible for these to be sent back to the manufacturer in order for this to be modified, while some people are happy risking the procedure themselves to avoid cost. Some recent optics have seen the design of their barrels revised to lift this

restriction, such as Canon's most recent TS-E 17mm $f/4L$ and TS-E 24mm $f/3.5L II$, as well as Hartblei's Super-Rotator series.

WHY BOTHER?

When software allows for both correction of the keystone effect and the creation of a pseudo-miniature one, investing in a dedicated lens to do much the same may seem unnecessary. For most photographers this will hold true, as the expense of such an optic is likely to be disproportionate to its actual necessity. Yet manufacturers continue to produce them and photographers continue to shoot with them. One reason is the need for software to work on an image that has already been captured, and therefore already has a finite amount of detail, which is compromised by subsequent adjustments. As tilt-and-shift lenses allow for these adjustments to be made prior to capture, images can be captured as close to the desired result as possible, while retaining their full quality. Clearly, there's also no way for a software program to bring defocused areas back into focus, and so again the advantage lies with the lens. **AP**



SCHEIMPFLUG PRINCIPLE

If you are happy to pay attention to angles and planes in your photography it is possible to find an optimal set of lens and camera movements to maximise depth of field for your particular subject. Presuming the subject plane is not parallel to the film plane (in which case no movements will be needed) the tilt movement of the lens should be used to angle the front element so it becomes closer to parallel to the subject instead. The idea is not to get the lens plane itself parallel to the subject, but to angle it so that if a line were drawn along that lens plane it would meet a line drawn from the film plane at exactly the spot where a line drawn from the subject plane would cross it. The ideal position is one where all those imaginary lines converge at a single point. This is the essence of the Scheimpflug principle, and although it sounds complicated, in use it is as simple to follow as it is useful. With tilt-and-shift lenses movements are often restricted, so the principle has some limitations that would not apply to the view cameras Scheimpflug himself used.

ALTERNATIVES

Predictably, the expense of such optics has created a market for cheaper alternatives. These can range from simple adapters and bellows, which allow the user to use their existing lenses, to third-party optics available in a selection of common mounts. More specialised examples include Horseman's View Camera Converter Pro – essentially a set of bellows mounted between a DSLR body and lens, which provides similar control to a view camera, with rising, drop and cross-front movements. Hasselblad's HTS 1.5 converter works on a similar principle, multiplying effective focal length by a factor of 1.5x and allowing a select number of standard lenses to be tilted and shifted. For less critical applications, Lensbabies can be used to vary the plane of the lens in relation to the sensor.

Lensbabies are a low-cost (and lo-fi) alternative to a dedicated tilt-and-shift lens



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	£22	£39.99	£42.99	£83.83	£29.99	£38.99	£225.18	£87.99	£4.99	£129.95	£4.99	£4.49	£16.49	£19.83	£19.99	£329	£127.99		
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	£34.99	£69.99	£79.99	£22.99	£4.99	£127.99	£59	£16.49	£31.49	£8.99	£22	£149.00	£225.18	£87.99	£129.95	£19.83	£319		
Nikon D700	EN-EL3e	MB-D10	EH-6 AC	EH-5A	MH-18A	MH-19	SB-900	WT-4	DK-17A	ML-3 IR	DG-2	DK-18	DR-5	Capture NX2	MC-35	MC-36	MC-30		
	£69.99	£259.49	£79.99	£79.99	£34.24	£195.73	£319	£597.02	£22.99	£214	£87.99	£6.99	£225.09	£129.95	£130	£149.99	£63.49		
Nikon D300	EN-EL3e	MB-D10	WT-4	MH-18A	MH-19	EH-6 AC	EH-5A	DK-21M	DK-23	BM-8	DR-6	SC-28	MC-35	MC-36	DK-5	Camera Control Pro 2	BF-1a		
	£69.99	£259.49	£597.02	£34.24	£195.73	£79.99	£79.99	£22.99	£4.99	£8.99	£225.18	£59	£130	£149.99	£4.99	£134	£6.99		
Nikon D3	EN-EL4a	MH-21	MH-22	BL-4	EH-6	WT-4	DK-17A	MC-30	MC-36	ML-3 IR	SC-29	DR-5	DG-2	DK-17M	Camera Control Pro 2	DK-18	MC-35		
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Canon EOS 40D	BG-E2N	OSKE3	BPS11	CB-SL	CA-PS400	CA-S70	ACK-E2	RS-B0N3	TC80N3	LC-5	Angle Finder C	EP-EX15	Rubber Fronting	Dioptics	Eyecup EB	WFT-E3A	IFC-500U
	£149.49	£179.99	£89.49	£44.03	£105	£42.99	£58.71	£44.49	£129	£322.96	£169	£19.99	£8.49	£9.99	£6.49	£699	£29.99
Canon EOS 5D Mark II	BG-E6	LP-E6	Wide Strap L6	OSKE3	RC-5	CB-S70	RS-B0N3	TC80N3	LC-5	Angle Finder C	EP-EX15	Rubber Fronting	Dioptics	Eyecup EB	Focus Screen	WFT-E4	IFC-500U
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Canon EOS 1D Mark III	LPE4	ACK-E4	LCE4	CB-S70	RS-B0N3	CB-TC80N	LCS	Angle Finder C	Antifog	Dioptics	Eyecup EG	Focus Screen	WFT-E2	OSKE3	Hand Strap E1	Wide Strap L6	IFC500U
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	£119.99	£86.03	£377.45	£36	£44.49	£129	£322.96	£169	£28.08	£9.99	£13.84	£29.99	£699.00	£179.99	£24.99	£22.49	£29.99

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SONY



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Body SRP £4,290.99



D3s
2 YEAR WARRANTY

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- D-Movie records high-definition (HD) movie clips
- 3-inch VGA LCD monitor
- Durable Magnesium alloy body

For the latest LOW Price on the Nikon D3s, as well as a variety of money saving offers, please visit www.ParkCameras.com

NEW DIGITAL SLR FROM NIKON - NEW LOW PRICE!!

Body SRP £1,499.99



D300s
2 YEAR WARRANTY

- 12.3 megapixel DX format CMOS image sensor
- 7 fps continuous shooting
- Records beautiful, high-definition (HD) movie clips
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- Dual card slots for CF/SD memory cards

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Nikon LENSES

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DS000 + 18-55mm VR £529.99 Nikon CF-DC2 Semi Soft Case w/bw £49.00 Nikon EN-EL9a Battery w/bw £52.00	D90 + 18-105mm VR £790.99 Nikon CF-D80 Semi Soft Case w/bw £43.00 Nikon EN-EL3e Battery w/bw £45.00

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- Magnesium alloy body

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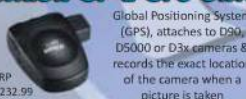
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T009 Colour	£24.99 65ml	£4.99 70ml, 3 for £13.99	Photo 900, 1270, 1290
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T037 Colour	£11.99 25ml	£4.99 31ml, 3 for £13.99	
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P-Type Filter System	
The P-Type square/rectangular filter system consists of three parts: 1) An adapter ring that screws onto the front of your lens. 2) A filter holder clips onto the ring. 3) One or more P-Type (84mm wide) filters	
P-Type Adapter Rings	
49mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
52mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
55mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
58mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
62mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
67mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
72mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
77mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
82mm Adapter Ring	£4.99

P-Type Holders	
Holder Standard	£5.99
Holder Wide Angle	£9.99
Hood Modular	£9.99
Hood Bellows	£34.99
A to P Type Adapter	£9.99

P-Type Bellows Hood	
A new design of Bellows Hood that slots into the front of a standard P-Type Holder.	£34.99

P-Type Filter Wallet	
A smooth cushioned filter wallet, to protect and store up to 8 P-Type filters	£9.99

P-Type Neutral Density Filter Kit	
We also stock Z-Pro (100mm) and A-Type (67mm) filters, holders and adapter rings	£42.99

P-Type Neutral Density Filter Kit	
Neutral Density filters have a multitude of uses - from increasing detail in landscapes and reducing over-exposed skies, to creating stunning motion scenes by reducing shutter speeds. Here's a kit which includes all the popular ND filters, and everything you need to get started! The kit contains: 1x ND2 Filter, 1x ND2 Soft Graduated Filter, 1x ND4 Filter, 1x ND4 Soft Graduated Filter, 1x P-Type Filter Holder, 1x P-Type Adapter Ring of your choice (49-82mm). Just £39.95 - saving £6 on the individual prices.	

P-Type Neutral Density Filter Kit	
ES-62 Canon 50/1.8	£9.99
ES-71II Canon 50/1.4	£9.99
ET-60 Canon 75-300/4-5.6	£9.99
ET-65B Canon 70-300/4-5.6	£9.99
ET-65III Canon 85/1.8	£9.99
ET-67 Canon 100/2.8 Macro	£9.99
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EW-60C Canon 18-55 IS	£7.99
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EW-78D Canon 18-200 IS	£9.99
EW-83E Canon 17-40/4.0	£12.99
EW-83J Canon 17-55/2.8	£12.99
HB-25 Nikon 24-85, 24-120	£12.99
HB-32 Nikon 18-105, 18-135	£7.99
HB-37 Nikon 55-200 VR	£7.99
HB-45 Nikon 18-55 VR	£7.99

P-Type Neutral Density Filter Kit	
This is just a sample, more in stock!	

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ES-71II Canon 50/1.4	£9.99
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HB-37 Nikon 55-200 VR	£7.99
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HB-32 Nikon 18-105, 18-135	£7.99
HB-37 Nikon 55-200 VR	£7.99
HB-45 Nikon 18-55 VR	£7.99

P-Type Neutral Density Filter Kit	
This is just a sample, more in stock!	

SQUARE FILTERS

P-Type Filter System
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3) One or more P-Type (84mm wide) filters

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52mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
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67mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
72mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
77mm Adapter Ring	£4.99
82mm Adapter Ring	£4.99

P-Type Holders	
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Holder Wide Angle	£9.99
Hood Modular	£9.99
Hood Bellows	£34.99
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HB-45 Nikon 18-55 VR	£7.99

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ET-67B Canon 60/2.8	£9.99
EW-60C Canon 18-55 IS	£7.99
EW-63II Canon 28/1.8, 28-105	£9.99
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77mm	£50	£99
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55mm	£17	£38	£70
58mm	£19	£38	£70
62mm	£24	£44	£85
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77mm	£47	£59	£132
82mm	£56	£69	£149
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80-200mm F4-5.6 AFD	E++ £399
80-400mm F4-5.6 AFD VR	E++ £1,499
85mm F1.4 AFD	E++ £649
85mm F2.8 AFD PC	E++ £849
180mm F2.8 ED AFD	E++ / Mint £499
TC20E1 Converter	E++ £249

Sigma 15mm F2.8 D EX DG Fisheye	E++ £349
Sigma 15mm F2.8 D EX DG Fisheye	E++ £349
Sigma 20mm F2.8 D EX DG	E++ £299
Sigma 28mm F2.8 A IF	E++ £129
Sigma 28-80mm F3.5-5.6 AF	E++ £39
Sigma 28-200mm F3.5-5.6 UC	E++ £79
Sigma 30mm F1.4 DC EX HSM	E++ £249-£279
Sigma 50mm F2.8 EX Macro	E++ £179
Sigma 50-500mm F4-6.3 APO DG HSM	E++ £649
Sigma 70mm F2.8 EX DG Macro	Mint £289
Sigma 70-300mm F4-5.6 APO DG	E++ £109
Sigma 70-300mm F4-5.6 APO Macro	E++ £109
Sigma 80-400mm F4.5-5.6 APO DG US	E++ £629-£659
Sigma 100-300mm F4 D APO EX HSM	E++ £699
Tamron 14mm F2.8 SP AF	New £599
Tamron 55-200mm F4-5.6 Di II	E++ £69
Tamron 70-210mm F2.8 SP AF LD	E++ £399
Teleplus 2x Converter	E++ £39
Teleplus 2x ProDUO Converter	E++ £79
Tokina 10-17mm F3.5-4.5 DX Fish Eye ATX	New £400
Tokina 60-135mm F2.8 ATX Pro DX	E++ £399
Zeiss 25mm F2.8 ZF	Mint £549
Zeiss 50mm F1.4 ZF	Mint £449
DR4 Right Angle Finder	Mint £89
DW20 Waist Level Finder	E++ £89
DWA Waist Level Finder	Mint £89
MB10 Grip (F90X)	E++ £35-£50
MB15 Grip (F100)	E++ £39
MB16 Grip (F80)	As Seen / E++ £19-£29
R1 Close-up Speedlight	Mint £309
SB20 Speedlight	E++ £39-£49
SB21A Macro Speedlight	Mint £225
SB21B Ringflash	E++ £149-£179
SB23 Speedlight	E++ £39
SB24 Speedlight	E++ £59-£79
SB28 Speedlight	E++ £99
SB28DX Speedlight	E++ £99
SB30 Speedlight	E++ £35
SB50DX Speedlight	E++ £69-£79

Nikon Manual

F3T Champagne Body Only	E++ £550
F3HP + MD4 Motor Drive	E++ / Mint £249-£499
F3HP Body Only	Exc / E++ £149-£399
F3AF Body Only	E++ £49
F4CT Titanium Body Only	Mint £499
F4A Chrome Body Only	E++ £329-£349
F4M2 Black Body Only	Exc £129
F4M2 Chrome Body Only	E++ £159-£179
F4M2 Chrome Body Only	E++ £129-£149
F4M Chrome Body Only	E++ £109
F4E2 Black Body Only	E++ £129-£139
F5 Chrome Body Only	Exc / E++ £189-£199
F6 Black Body Only	E++ £109
FG Chrome Body Only	E++ £65
F Photomic FTN + 50mm F1.4	E++ / Mint £499-£1,299

18mm F3.5 AIS	As Seen / Exc £159-£199
24mm F2.8 AI	E++ £249-£299
24mm F2.8 AI	E++ £129-£139
24mm F2.8 AID	E++ £149
24mm F2.8 AIS	Unused / E++ £149-£450
28mm F2.8 Series E	E++ £55
28mm F2.8 PC Shift	E++ £450
28mm F4 PC Shift	E++ £299-£395
35mm F2.8 AIS	Unused £699
35mm F2.8 AIS	As Seen / Mint £394-£450
35mm F2.5 Series E	As Seen £59
35mm F2.8 AI	As Seen / E++ £69-£79
35mm F2.8 Non AI	As Seen £49
35mm F2.8 PC Shift	E++ £299
35-105mm F3.5-4.5 AIS	As Seen / E++ £49-£149
35-72mm F3.5 Series E	E++ £45
43-96mm F3.5 Auto	Unused £175
45mm F2.8 P	Mint £249
50mm F1.4 AI	E++ £125
50mm F1.4 AIS	Unused £350
55mm F2.8 AIS Micro	Exc / E++ £79-£179
55mm F3.5 Micro Non AI	E++ £79
55mm F3.5 Non AI Micro	E++ £79
70-210mm F4-5.6 AFD	E++ £69
80-200mm F4 AIS	E++ £125-£149
100-300mm F5.6 AIS	E++ £159-£179
100mm F2.8 Series E	E++ £79
105mm F2.5 Non AI	As Seen £69-£79
105mm F2.8 AIS Micro	E++ / Mint £299-£399
105mm F4 AI Macro	Mint £119
105mm F4 AI Macro	As Seen / E++ £99-£129
105mm F4 AIS Micro	E++ £199
120mm F4 Medical	E++ £499-£750
135mm F2.8 AI	E++ £399
135mm F2.8 AIS	As Seen £35
135mm F2.8 Auto Q	Unused £250
135mm F2.8 Non AI	As Seen £45
135mm F3.5 AI	As Seen £59
135mm F3.5 Auto Q	Unused £175
135mm F3.5 Non AI	Exc £39
135mm F3.5 ED AIS	E++ £299
200mm F4 Auto Q	Unused £199
200mm F5.6 Medical	E++ / E++ £399-£499
400mm F5.6 IFED AIS	E++ £399
TC14A Converter	E++ £199
TC200 Converter	E++ £49-£69
TC201 Converter	E++ £89-£129
TC300 Converter	As Seen / E++ £75-£99
105mm F4 Macro	E++ £75
35-120mm F1.1 SLDIR	E++ £399
90mm F2.5 SP Macro	E++ £39
2x Macro Converter	E++ £25
50mm F1.4 ZF	E++ £449
DR2 Spot Finder	Exc / E++ £75-£129
DR2 Prism	E++ £35
DG3 Eyepiece Magnifier	E++ / Mint £20-£35
DR3 Right Angle Finder	Mint £35
F Waist Level Finder	E++ £45
MD11 Motor Drive	As Seen / E++ £35-£99
MD12 Motor Drive	Exc / E++ £39-£85
MD14 Motor Drive	E++ £59
MD15 Motor Drive	E++ £39-£45
MD16 Motor Drive	Exc / E++ £49-£145
MR1 Rewind Back	E++ £39
PS4 Bellows + PS4 Copier	E++ £199
PS5 Bellows	E++ £165
PF2 Focus Stage	E++ £89

PV1 Extension Tube	E++ £35
Recon K3 Model FF	Mint £499
SB11 Speedlight	E++ £79
SB15 Speedlight	E++ £29-£35
SB17 Speedlight	E++ £35-£45
SB18 Speedlight	E++ £15-£30
SBA Speedlight	E++ £15

Olympus - Please Phone

Pentax 645

Sigma 100-300mm F4 D APO EX HSM	E++ £699
Tamron 14mm F2.8 SP AF	New £599
Tamron 55-200mm F4-5.6 Di II	E++ £69
Tamron 70-210mm F2.8 SP AF LD	E++ £399
Teleplus 2x Converter	E++ £39
Teleplus 2x ProDUO Converter	E++ £79
Tokina 10-17mm F3.5-4.5 DX Fish Eye ATX	New £400
Tokina 60-135mm F2.8 ATX Pro DX	E++ £399
Zeiss 25mm F2.8 ZF	Mint £549
Zeiss 50mm F1.4 ZF	Mint £449
DR4 Right Angle Finder	Mint £89
DW20 Waist Level Finder	E++ £89
DWA Waist Level Finder	Mint £89
MB10 Grip (F90X)	E++ £35-£50
MB15 Grip (F100)	E++ £39
MB16 Grip (F80)	As Seen / E++ £19-£29
R1 Close-up Speedlight	Mint £309
SB20 Speedlight	E++ £39-£49
SB21A Macro Speedlight	Mint £225
SB21B Ringflash	E++ £149-£179
SB23 Speedlight	E++ £39
SB24 Speedlight	E++ £59-£79
SB28 Speedlight	E++ £99
SB28DX Speedlight	E++ £99
SB30 Speedlight	E++ £35
SB50DX Speedlight	E++ £69-£79

Pentax 6x7

67 Mirror Up Body Only	Exc £199
67 Mirror Up + Prism	E++ £279
35mm F4.5 Fisheye Takumar	E++ / E++ £449-£650
50mm F4	As Seen / E++ £159-£299
55-100mm F4.5 SMC	E++ £549
75mm F4.5 Shift	Exc / E++ £499-£699
135mm F4 Macro	Exc / E++ £149-£299
150mm F2.8	E++ £149
150mm F2.8 Takumar	As Seen / E++ £109-£179
165mm F2.8	Exc / E++ £139-£249
165mm F2.8 SMC	E++ £179
200mm F4	E++ / E++ £199-£249
200mm F4 Takumar	E++ / E++ £139-£199
300mm F4 SMC	E++ £349
300mm F4 Takumar	As Seen / E++ £199-£349
400mm F4 Takumar	E++ £449
500mm F5.6	E++ £499-£599
800mm F4 Takumar	E++ £299
800mm F6.7 SMC	E++ £299
1.4x Rear Converter	E++ £295
2x Rear Converter T6	E++ £179
Magnifying Hood	E++ £35
NPC Polaroid Mag	E++ £149

Pentax AF - Please Phone

Pentax Manual - Please Phone

Rollei 6003/6/8

6008AF Complete	Mint £2,750
6008AF Body Kit	New £3,450
6008 Complete	E++ £629
6008 Mk1 Complete	E++ £699-£499
50mm F4 HFT	Exc / E++ £299-£399
50mm F4 PQ	E++ £650
50mm F4 PQ EL	E++ £599
120mm F4 PQ Macro	E++ £399
120mm F4 HFT	E++ £399
150mm F4 HFT	Exc / E++ £199-£299
150mm F4 PQ	E++ £650
150mm F4 PQS	E++ £650
250mm F5.6 HFT	E++ £399
250mm F5.6 PQS	E++ £649
300mm F5.6 HFT	E++ / E++ £499-£549
2x HFT Converter	E++ £115-£169
120 Insert	E++ / New £15-£69
120 Magazine (6006)	E++ / E++ £69-£125
120 Magazine (6008)	E++ £125
120 Magazine (6008) (6x4.5) 6008	E++ £199
4500 Magazine + Adapter	E++ £349
Polaroid Mag 6006	E++ £35
Polaroid Mag 6008	E++ / New £139-£199
Polaroid Mag SLK6002/3	E++ £395
45 Degree Prism	E++ / Mint £179-£299
Extension Tube 17	E++ £79-£99
FM1 Flashmeter	New £199

Rollei SL66/ESE - Please Phone

Rollei Twin Lens - Please Phone

Bessa R4A Black Body Only	E++ £499
Bessa R3M Black Body Only	E++ £399
Bessa R2M + 50mm F2	Mint £849
Bessa T Chrome Body Only	E++ £169
12mm F5.6 + Finder	E++ / Mint £449-£499
15mm F4.5 + Finder	E++ £299
21mm F4 Color Scope	E++ / Mint £199-£249
25mm F4 + Finder	E++ £239
25mm F2.5 Color Helier	E++ £239
90mm F3.5 Apo Lanthar	E++ £239
50mm Black Finder	E++ £39
T Window	E++ £79

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LIMITED STOCKS**

**LOWEPRO
PRIMUS AW**

40th Anniversary Bag

- * Internal dimension 12.6" x 5.7" x 7.3"
- * External dimension 13" x 9.3" x 20.1"
- * Fits- Pro Digital SLR + 1/2 Lenses
- + Flash

SRP £159

SPECIAL £49.99

TOKINA 10-17mm

f3.5/5.6 AT-DX

Nikon fit

- * Full Frame
- Fish-Eye DX
- * Angle of View 180° to 100°
- * Built In Hood
- * Weight 350g

SRP £719

SPECIAL £399.99

**RICOH GRII DIGITAL
CREATIVE SET**

- * Inc GW1 Converter to make lens a 21mm equivalent
- * 10 Million Pixels
- * Auto / Manual Functions
- * 1.5cm Close Focus
- * Takes Lithium battery or 2x AAA

Set comprises GR Digital II, GW1, GV2

Finder, GH1 Adapter, GC2 Case + Strap

SRP £739

SPECIAL £399

MAMIYA 7II + 80mm

f4 L lens

Improved 6x7 range finder

* Bright finder for quick focusing in low light

* Leaf shutter & built in darkslide

* Light meter

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SRP £2900

NOW £1299 (demo)

SEKONIC L308S

Flashmate

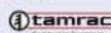
Backpacks

Tamrac Adventure 75 Rust

Lightweight, high-mobility back pack providing foam-padded protection and quick access to multiple SLRs, lenses, flash and accessories. The interior lid of the main compartment features their patented memory & battery management System™ using red flags to identify available memory cards & batteries. Windowpane-Mesh™ pockets organize film, filters and other small accessories. The QuickClip™ tripod system holds a tripod centered and balanced on the pack. A comfortable, foam-padded backpack harness and adjustable waist strap provide easy carrying comfort. Other features include: LockDown™ Rain Flap for weather protection, front pocket to hold a light jacket/accessories, and an EasyGrip™ carrying handle.

Adventure 75 Rust

- Adventure 75 Black £72.97
- Adventure 6 £34.97
- Adventure 7 £34.97
- Adventure 9 £34.97
- Adventure 10 £34.97
- Aero 70 SAVE £221
- Aero Speedpack 75 Rust £44.97
- Aero Speedpack 75 Black £56.95
- Aero 80 SAVE £341
- Aero Speedpack 85 £65.95
- Expedition 3 SAVE £201
- Expedition 4X SAVE £601
- Expedition 5X £39.95
- Expedition 6X SAVE £701
- Expedition 8X £38.95
- Expedition 9X £149.90
- Travel Pack 71 SAVE £121



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- Computrekker AW SAVE £561
- Dryzone Rover
- Dryzone 100 SAVE £661
- Dryzone 200 SAVE £811
- Fastpack 100
- Fastpack 200
- Fastpack 250 SAVE £191
- Fastpack 350 SAVE £301
- Flipside 200 SAVE £171
- Flipside 300
- Flipside 400AW SAVE £401
- Mini Trekker AW Forest Green
- Primus Minimus AW SAVE £1101
- Pro Trekker 300AW SAVE £41
- Pro Trekker 400AW SAVE £41
- Pro Trekker 600AW SAVE £41
- Pro Trekker AW II SAVE £1001
- Rover AW II SAVE £171
- Vertex 100AW SAVE £301
- Vertex 200AW SAVE £421
- Vertex 300AW SAVE £601



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- DR-4651 SAVE £111
- DR-466 SAVE £251
- DR-4661 SAVE £91
- DR-4671 SAVE £51
- D 3-N-1 10 SAVE £161
- D 3-N-1 11 SAVE £101
- D 3-N-1 20 SAVE £181
- D 3-N-1 22 SAVE £101
- D 3-N-1-30 SAVE £261
- D 3-N-1-33 SAVE £101
- Prism U SAVE £181
- R-101 SAVE £241
- R-102
- R-103
- R-104
- R-106
- Sensitivity V SAVE £201



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- Airport Ultralight V2 £121.99
- Airport Antidote V2 £148.99
- Airport Acceleration V2 £190.00
- Airport Addicted V2 £230.00
- Glass Taxi £95.00
- Rotation 360 £179.99
- Shapeshifter £209.99
- Street Walker £94.95
- Street Walker Pro £119.95
- Street Walker Hard Drive £139.00



THINK TANK

Roller Bags

ThinkTank Airport International V2

Holds pro size DSLRs and super telephoto lenses with lens hoods up to 500mm. TSA approved combination lock secures the main compartment. The zipper sliders fit into the TSA combination lock. Security cable and lock in rear pocket can secure the bag to immovable objects. Security cable and lock in front pocket can secure laptop cases to the Airport™ International v2.0. Rain cover included. Expandable / stretchable front pocket.

Airport International V2 £229.90

- Airport Airstream £198.00
- Airport Takeoff £245.00
- Airport Security V2 £260.00



thinkTANK

Toploading Bags

Kata H-12 Digital Holster

Part of the new Global Digital Collection incorporating TST - Thermo Shield Technology for the ultimate in protection from bumps and heat, while remaining light weight. Besides great protection, the revolutionary design of the H-Series holsters also allows quick access to the camera and lens. The camera is held in place by either looping a divider around the lens, or by creating a partition across the bag, while the supplied media kit organizes your media cards and batteries. Five padded pockets inside and out store filters, cleaning kit, light meter etc.



MORRIS
Save you £14

- H-12 £55.95
- H-10 SAVE £121
- H-14 SAVE £161
- H-16XL SAVE £181
- DH-425 SAVE £51
- DH-425 SAVE £61



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- Topload Zoom AW SAVE £71
- Toploader 70AW SAVE £81
- Toploader 75AW SAVE £301
- Toploader Pro 65AW SAVE £201
- Toploader Pro 70AW SAVE £201
- Toploader Pro 75AW SAVE £351



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- Adventure Zoom 3 SAVE £81
- Adventure Zoom 5 SAVE £101
- Digital Zoom 3 SAVE £121
- Digital Zoom 4 SAVE £141
- Pro Digital Zoom 7
- Pro Digital Zoom 5
- Pro Digital Zoom 10



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- Digital Holster 20
- Digital Holster 30
- Digital Holster 40
- Digital Holster 50



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Lowepro Classified AW Series

Designed with professional photographers and photojournalists in mind, Classified AW Series with its slim profile, contours with the body making it comfortable to carry all day. Soft edges, briefcase styling and leather details give it a stylish yet subtle look compared to other camera bags. Features include leather details inside and out; collapsible, removable padding in the main compartment allowing for customisable organisation; a removable memory card wallet; unique dividers with full-grain leather trim shaped to suspend and protect the lens mounting point; a padded shoulder strap with camera keeper and 3-point stabilizing strap and a built-in All Weather Cover™ to protect contents from the elements.



LOWEPRO

- Classified 140AW SAVE £201 £79.95
- Classified 160AW SAVE £301
- Classified 200AW SAVE £411
- Classified 250AW SAVE £401



LOWEPRO

- Stealth Reporter D100AW SAVE £111
- Stealth Reporter D200AW SAVE £171
- Stealth Reporter D400AW SAVE £171
- Stealth Reporter D550AW SAVE £191
- Stealth Reporter D650AW SAVE £411



MORRIS
Save you £119.97

- PR-420 SAVE £111
- PR-440 SAVE £211
- PR-460 SAVE £311



MORRIS
Save you £119.97

- Explorer 100
- Explorer 200 SAVE £171
- Explorer 400 SAVE £191
- System 3
- System 6 SAVE £191
- Ultra Pro 7 SAVE £121
- Ultra Pro 11 SAVE £351
- Ultra Pro 13 SAVE £451
- Ultra Pro 17



TAMRAC



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Aluminium Tripods

Manfrotto 190XDB

Lighter in weight and slightly more compact than the Manfrotto 190XPROB, it has an ergonomic leg angle release mechanism and wing locking knobs. Rapid centre column. Load length: 53.5cm. Leg sections: 3. Load capacity: 5 kg. Maximum height: 146cm, maximum height (with center column down): 118.5cm. Minimum height: 35cm. Weight: 1.60kg.



MORRIS
Save you £15

- 190XDB £59.95
- 190XDB SAVE £271
- 190XPROB SAVE £301
- 055XDB SAVE £451
- 055XDB SAVE £361
- 055XPROB SAVE £421
- 725B Including Ball Head



Manfrotto

- 300DX Inc Head SAVE £531
- 330DX Inc Head SAVE £511
- 340DX Including Head SAVE £851
- 400DX Including Head SAVE £431
- 500DX Including Head SAVE £1111
- 700DX Including Head SAVE £1521



SLIK

- Sherpa 200R Inc Head
- Sherpa 450R Inc Head
- Sherpa 200R Including Head
- Sherpa 550R Including Head
- Sherpa 600R Including Head
- Sherpa 750R Including Head



Velbon

- MTL9241B SAVE £121
- MTL9251B SAVE £131
- MTL9271B SAVE £111
- MTL9351B SAVE £81
- MTL9361B
- MTL9251B + MHS011 SAVE £131



GIOTTO

- Nanamax 220 Inc Head
- Nanamax 250 Including Head
- Nanamax 260 Including Head



CULLMANN

Carbon Fibre Tripods

Velbon GEO Series

GEO tripods use a unique Carbon-Fibre and Basalt composite material which gives the legs added strength and rigidity. They feature spiral etched surfaces for smooth, fast extension as well as unique lever locking leg sections. Each leg is fitted with an adjustable tip, giving rubber or spike options. Also unique is Velbon's new centre column quick release lever which allows fast adjustment of column height. The two-section centre column can be split for low-angle use in macro photography etc. Velbon GEO series tripods are supplied with a multi purpose leg pouchette, used for comfortable shoulder carrying and as a stone bag for added tripod support in windy conditions.



MORRIS
Save you £19

- GEO E440L
- GEO E540
- GEO E540L
- GEO E640L



Velbon

- 190CXPRO3 SAVE £751
- 190CXPRO4 SAVE £801
- 055CXPRO3 SAVE £901
- 055CXPRO4 SAVE £911
- 7322CY + 484R2C Head SAVE £451



Manfrotto

- 713CF II SAVE £1791
- 714CF II SAVE £1531
- MT8246B
- MTL8271B SAVE £51
- MTL8350B SAVE £321
- MTL8351B SAVE £211
- MTL8361B SAVE £251



SLIK

- MT8246B
- MTL8271B SAVE £51
- MTL8350B SAVE £321
- MTL8351B SAVE £211
- MTL8361B SAVE £251



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Monopods

Velbon

- Ultrastick 50 Titanium
- GEO E64 Carbon Fibre

SLIK

- 350 Aluminium
- 350EX Aluminium Inc Head

GIOTTO

- MML3260B
- MML3270B
- MML3290B

Manfrotto

- 679B
- 680B
- 681B
- 685B
- 790B Modo
- 694CX
- 695CX



MORRIS
Save you £119.97

Colour Management

Datacolour Spyder 3 Elite

You can rely on consistent and accurate color throughout your studio and digital workflow with the Datacolour Spyder 3 Elite. The datacolour Spyder 3 elite is the only colorimeter on the market offering a seven colorator color engine, with an aperture several times larger than other devices, thereby increasing its light sensitivity by 400 percent for increased accuracy and performance. This ensures consistent color on all LCD, CRT, laptop and front projector displays.



MORRIS
Save you £46

Spyder 3 Elite

- Spyder 3 Express SAVE £51
- Spyder 3 Pro SAVE £301
- Spyder 3 Studio SR SAVE £221

£124.95

£64.95

£89.95

£379.95

X-Rite Eye-One Display LT

A user-friendly LCD, CRT and laptop monitor calibration solution combining simplified, user-friendly software with the industry standard i1 colorimeter. Eye-One Display LT utilises an easy-to-use wizard interface, pre-defined monitor gamma and white point settings, making the monitor calibration process as simple as possible. The i1Display LT also features an ambient light measurement head, which allows you to assess the brightness of your work area.

£129.95

Eye-One Display LT

- Eye-One Display 2 SAVE £301

£87.95

£129.95

X-Rite Mini Colour Checker Chart

Made to the same exacting standards as the Gretag Macbeth Colour Checker chart, this X-Rite miniature chart is invaluable for close-up portrait or other macro work. Use as a visual colour check or in conjunction with camera profiling software to create ICC profiles of your digital camera.

£48.89

Mini Colour Checker Chart

- Gretag/Macbeth Colour Checker Chart SAVE £71
- Colour Checker Passport

£55.99

£79.00

Pantone huey Pro

huey PRO combines the innovative form and ease of use of the award-winning PANTONE huey with increased levels of functionality. In addition to automated calibration, the huey PRO offers users greater control over brightness and contrast, with separate menu choices for the selection of gamma and white point settings. Another key feature of the huey PRO is multiple monitor support, ideal for colour professionals working with more than one display and looking to achieve colour consistency across their system.

£78.90

huey Pro

- huey SAVE £141

£54.90

LOTS MORE ON WEB

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Studio Lighting

Interfit EX150 MKII Kit

More power than its predecessor and a newly designed polycarbonate body. Easy access to the controls ensures you can set just the right amount of light on your subject. Each head features user changeable flash tubes, switchable modelling lamps & built in infrared sensor for ease of use.



MORRIS
Save you £71

EX150 2 Head Kit INT182

- EX150 3 Head Kit INT183

£198.95

£337.90

Interfit Supe Coollite 5

- IN STOCK INT117

£267.99

£267.99

Interfit EXD200 2 Head Kit

Lightweight and contemporary in design with user changeable flash tubes and low sync voltage, this unit is the ideal choice for the digital home user. This kit offers outstanding features at an affordable price. Kit comprises 2 heads, 2 stands, 60cm softbox, translucent white umbrella, cables, cards & instructions in carry case.

£257.99

Super Coollite 5 Kit INT117

- Interfit Strobes

£257.99

Interfit Strobes

- EFX Kit includes...

£274.90

- 2 x Honeycombs grid - 20" & 30"
- 1 x Snoot, 1 x Velcro strap,
- 1 x Bounce card set,
- 1 x Honeycomb bounce tube
- 1 X Soft carry case.

Strobe EFX Kit MORRIS SAVE YOU £61

- Portrait Kit includes...

£299.90

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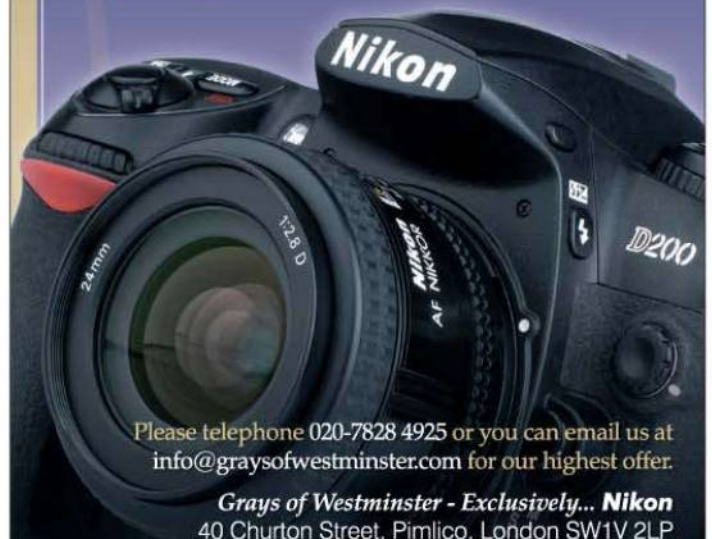
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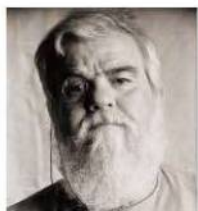
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ROGER HICKS

Will future generations lose out because of the attitudes to photography that society holds today?

IMAGINE that you are reading this not in the 21st century, but in the 45th. It is a time unimaginably distant from our own, and yet we are separated from it by the same span of time as separates us from Aristophanes, the greatest writer of Greek comedy, born around 2,500 years ago. The oldest edition I have of Aristophanes was itself published more than 400 years ago, in 1602, around 150 years after the invention of printing with movable type. In other words, less time separates that book from the invention of printing than separates us today from the invention of photography.

Now, here's the strange part. Barring the extinction of mankind, which is possible but highly improbable, someone will probably read this column in the 45th century, or even more likely in the 55th. With hundreds or thousands of inhabited planets and uncountable billions of human beings by AD 5600, there are going to be super-specialised historians who are interested in (for example) not just the history of photography, but those few decades where digital imaging first appeared and silver halide took a bigger hit than anyone imagined. They may well wish to draw parallels with their own time, pointing out how slood is now far less important since the advent of gomp.

As slood and gomp clearly illustrate, there will be new words, new ideas, new world pictures. The structure and spelling of the English language itself will probably have changed a lot, too. In all likelihood there will be far more elisions and simplifications. Even so, there is no inherent reason why the article you are reading now should be any less understandable to a 45th century reader than the Greek of Aristophanes is to a speaker or reader of Greek today. It might be difficult and archaic, but it should be far from incomprehensible.

Yet (and this is strange too) for a piece of work to survive there will be far less need for its author to be a towering genius than was the case in the time of Aristophanes. There are endlessly more copies of everything, many online, in countless distributed servers all over the world. Facsimiles, or at least good copies, abound of both modest rarities and unique manuscripts: on my shelves I have *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* and the Hove reprint of the

1933 Leitz general catalogue. By the 45th century, or the 55th, there should be innumerable copies on countless worlds.

As well as reading words from the remote past, people will look at pictures, too. Imagine Don McCullin's pictures of the Battle of Marathon, or coverage by *Helló!* magazine of the wedding of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. People change far less than technology does. As Buddha put it, again 2,500 years ago, all sentient beings desire happiness and the

causes of happiness, and to avoid suffering and the causes of suffering.

The question is, what relevance might this have to the pictures we take today? The answer, as so often, must surely be 'everything and nothing'. Everything, because the philosopher Kant's categorical imperative tells us that whatever we

do, we should always act in a way that is consistent with the way we would wish everyone to act: as Lord Chesterfield put it, 'Do as you would be done by.' And nothing, because if we are decent people, we always try to live up to the categorical imperative anyway, whether we are trying to create great art with our cameras, or take happy-snaps of loved ones.

So what does it mean to say 'the way we would want everyone to act'? Suddenly, from a perspective of 2,500 years, human curiosity overcomes human pettiness. Are we so obsessed with stopping anyone taking pictures of children, as a result of vaporous fears cooked up by the gutter press, that we would willingly forego a chance to see pictures of children at play 2,500 years ago? Or 250 years ago? Or 25 years ago?

It is part of the human condition to be curious about others: how they live, the insides of their houses, the food they eat, the way they earn their daily bread. To be sure, a desire for reasonable privacy is also a part of the human condition. Sometimes the most trivial examples are the most telling. Would you want to be photographed picking your nose, or scratching your bum?

The key word, though, is reasonable privacy. The risk of being photographed in an unflattering light is trivial, as compared with the fascination that other pictures of daily life will offer in 2,500 years. Or 250 years. Or 25 years. Or, if they're done well enough, today. **AP**

Roger Hicks is a much published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many magazines. Visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com.

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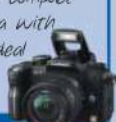


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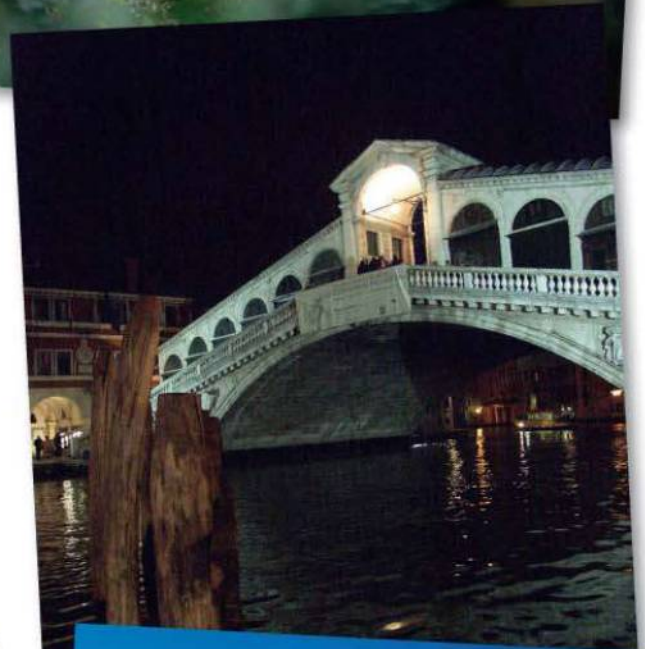
OVER the past decade, digital capture has had an incredible impact on photography. It doesn't particularly matter whether you believe it's the best thing since Daguerre and Fox Talbot popped out of their respective sheds with the earliest prints, or that it's the greatest travesty since Kodak ceased production of Kodachrome 64 (or Polaroid just ceasing production). The fact is, the 'digital revolution' has been all-encompassing and irreversible.

For me, one of the most liberating things to come from this has been the ability for anyone to pick up a camera and produce great results. No longer is photography some sort of exclusive club that demands you spend your apprenticeship in the darkroom loading and unloading film and sweating over trays of chemicals. Now you just pay your money, take your camera and away you go.

Yet as much as I love the accessibility of digital capture, its implementation frustrates me. Instead of thinking about their exposures, photographers now have the freedom of 'intelligent' auto modes and high-capacity cards that allow them to shoot ad nauseam, machine-gunning the world around them in the hope (or belief) that at least one picture will be OK. The problem is, the more automated systems we're given, the more we want to use them and the more we come to rely on them. And the more we rely on them, the more we're actually saying, 'My camera probably knows best...' I know it's true, because I'm guilty of it at times.

In this supplement we're going to redress that balance by exploring ways in which we can take some pretty fundamental decisions away from the camera and start getting a little more creative. The starting point for this is taking control of your aperture and shutter speed – the two primary exposure controls on your camera. Simply exploring these two areas can make a huge difference to your photography compared to the 'safe' combinations offered by your camera's auto mode.

So whether you want to wean yourself off auto, are looking for inspiration or just want to try something you haven't done before, this is the place to start. Enjoy. **Chris Gatcum**



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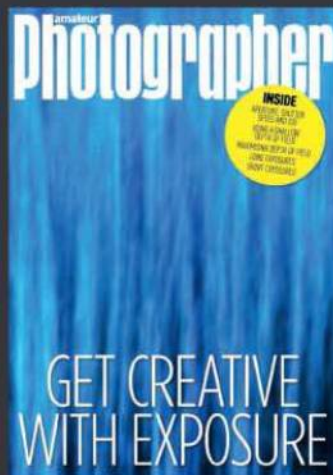
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Beyond the basics

Aperture, shutter speed and ISO

The key exposure controls are often taken for granted, but understanding how they work is essential if you want to get the best from your camera

WHEN it comes to the fundamentals of photography, the aperture, shutter speed and ISO are the most powerful tools your camera has. Together they form the 'holy trinity' of exposure, determining the overall brightness of an image to produce the 'perfect' exposure. For anyone starting out in photography, mastering this trio is a major step towards mastering photography itself. At the same time, though, once you've grasped the basic principles it's easy to fall into an exposure 'rut', where applying exposure settings becomes a formulaic, almost mechanical exercise, rather than a creative one. When that happens, your photography can become equally formulaic and predictable – perhaps even a little boring. Therefore, the key is not only to understand what these controls are, what they do and how they work, but also to take control and start thinking about how you use them rather than slavishly sticking to 'the rules'.

BELOW LEFT
Landscapes
don't always have
to be sharply
focused from the
foreground to
the background

BELOW RIGHT
Sometimes no
focus can be just
as effective as a
sharp image, so
don't be too quick
to hit delete on
your camera

APERTURE

The long-established 'law of apertures' tells us we need to stop our lenses down to produce the sharpest results from any given optic (usually by a couple of stops, hence the 'two stops down' rule). That's great to know, but it doesn't mean you should always set your lens to f/8 or f/11. Achieving the sharpest result should never be confused with creating the best image.

For example, when was the last time you used a wide aperture to shoot a landscape? For a huge number of photographers this would be a foolish idea, but think of it another way – if you asked 100 photographers to photograph the same landscape, how many would instinctively use a small aperture? This isn't about right or wrong, but the answer's pretty obvious – most, if not all the photographers would likely shoot at f/16 or thereabouts to keep everything sharp.

Why? Because it's what we've been told we should do for landscape photography. It's what's expected, it's 'safe', and it abides by 'the rules'.

Yet this means all those photographers will be producing very similar results, and a wide-aperture landscape would immediately stand out from the crowd, simply because it's different and unexpected. The bottom line is that while 'two stops down' is valid, it isn't the only aperture setting worth using. If it were, your lens wouldn't have so many other options.

'Most, if not all photographers would likely shoot at f/16 or thereabouts to keep everything sharp'



SHUTTER SPEED

Just as there are rules about which aperture you should use, so there are rules about the 'right' shutter speed to employ in any given situation. When you're handholding your camera, for example, you should use a shutter speed that's the reciprocal of the focal length to guarantee sharpness: that is, 1/100sec with a 100mm focal length, 1/200sec with a 200mm focal length and so on.

Again, though, it's easy to adopt this advice as an immutable law, and add yet another predictable formula to your exposure decisions. Who says that you can't take a portrait using an exposure of several seconds or more that softens the subject? It certainly wasn't the pioneers of photography, who used ultra-slow glass plates to record subjects sitting for their cameras. Their images don't get condemned to the wastebasket for being 'slightly fuzzy', so why should yours? Understanding how to create movement-free images is commendable, but intentionally breaking the rules and stepping beyond convention is equally valid.

ISO

The final exposure control is the ISO, and the conventional rule here is to shoot at the slowest ISO setting you can get away with to avoid introducing too much noise into an image. Now, this is one rule we agree with wholeheartedly. It's not because we believe the world should only be filled with smoothly textured images; it's because image-editing programs give much greater control when you want to add texture or 'grain' to an image. Creating a coarsely textured image using a software package is always a better option than relying on a high ISO setting and the camera's 'default' noise levels.



LEFT
Shooting b&w images in-camera with a high ISO setting can add a gritty edge

RIGHT Your image-editing program gives greater control over noise or 'grain' than your ISO



Using a shallow depth of field

Take control of depth of field to unlock the true potential of your pictures

WHILE knowing the 'rules' of photography (and how to break them) is one thing, you need to have the right tools in your camera bag to put the theory into practice. A lot of amateurs find themselves starting out with a relatively slow-aperture zoom lens, and that's about as far as they get, which is a desperate shame. A faster lens, with a maximum aperture of f/2.8 or wider, gives you more options on your aperture dial – and this means more creative options for your photographs. While wide-aperture lenses can be expensive, there are potential wide-aperture bargains to be had if you're happy to start with a manual-focus 'legacy' lens or two.

LEGACY LENSES

We're not claiming this is a one-stop solution to pixel-perfect digital images, but legacy lenses will let you try out a range of focal lengths and apertures without bankrupting yourself in the process. A proprietary lens from a few decades ago might fit straight onto your digital SLR (especially if it's a

Nikon or Pentax camera), but if not, there are hundreds of M42 screw-thread lenses just begging to be bought, and there's certain to be an appropriate adapter to connect them to your SLR.

Of course, given that these lenses pre-date digital imaging (and in some cases electronic metering) it isn't as straightforward as simply attaching it to your camera and shooting. You're going to be looking at manual focus and stop-down metering for a start, and you might also encounter dubious meter readings and chromatic aberrations at some (or all) aperture settings.

Yet manual lenses have their benefits. For a start, a prime lens only has to be optimised for a single focal length, so it's easier for the lens designers to maximise image quality. Also, as these are full-frame lenses, using them on a camera with an APS-C or Four Thirds sensor means you are only using the centre of the lens. In essence, this means you're using the best part of an optimised lens design and this can mean that an old manual optic can outperform a modern, budget zoom lens, despite the handling quirks.

BELOW
Cheap extension tubes and macro bellows make manual lenses a great way to explore close-up photography

WHICH LEGACY LENS?

- A 50mm f/1.8 'standard' lens is a great all-round choice. On a non-full-frame camera, its 75–100mm effective focal length (depending on your camera's sensor size) makes it great for portraits.
- For around £20 you can buy a second-hand M42-mount 135mm f/2.8 lens. It might sound like an odd focal length, but stick it on a non-full-frame camera and you're looking at a 200–270mm effective focal length (depending on the sensor) with a fast f/2.8 aperture.



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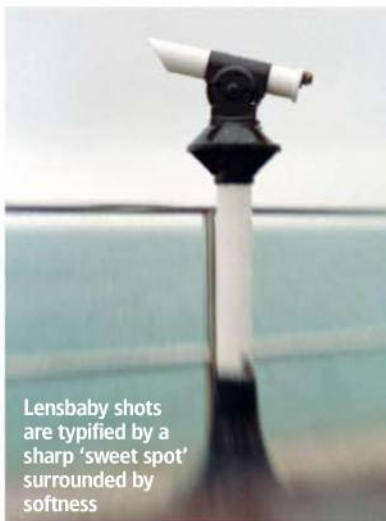


TILT-AND-SHIFT LENSES

Although a wide aperture setting will help you minimise the depth of field in an image, nothing matches the results you can get from a tilt-and-shift lens. The shift function is largely redundant here as it's most useful for correcting perspective in architectural photography. However, the tilt function can open up a whole new way of seeing for the creative photographer.

As you can see on page 10, tilting a lens forwards enables you to increase depth of

field, which is a classic technique for landscape photography. However, apply a backward tilt and you can start to restrict the depth of field, even at a small aperture. You can also adjust the direction of the plane of focus so your thin sliver of sharpness isn't restricted to running horizontally across the frame. Instead, it can travel diagonally or vertically to add a new dynamic to your images or create a classic toy-world feel, as if you're looking at a small-scale model rather than a life-size scene.



LENSBABY

In recent years the Lensbaby has seen several incarnations (not to mention severe price increases), but the principle remains the same: you attach it to your SLR like any other lens, and its flexible design means you can creatively control the point of focus.

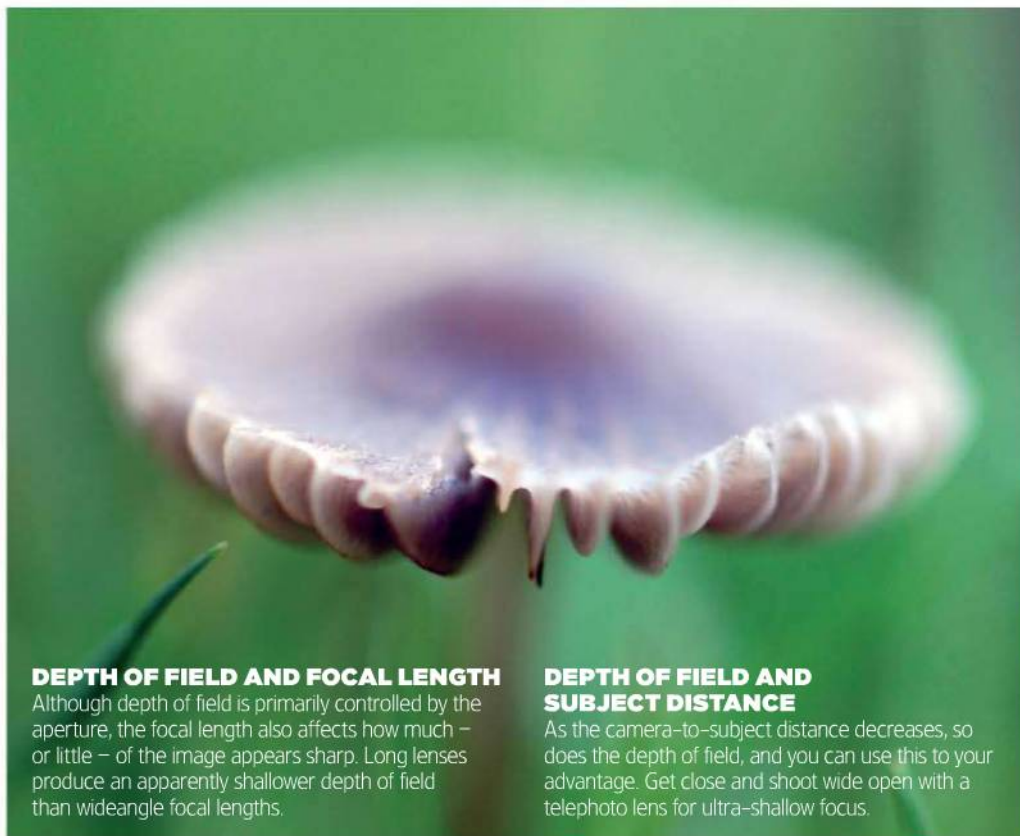
Lensbabies are not true tilt-and-shift lens alternatives, as they deliver a circular zone of sharpness (a 'sweet spot') from their low-tech optics, but the results are certainly unique compared to conventional lens designs.



WORKING WITH SHALLOW DEPTH OF FIELD

In essence, all you need to start shooting with a shallow depth of field is a wide-aperture lens, but this doesn't mean the widest aperture setting is always the right one. There are a number of other things to consider, starting with how shallow you want your depth of field to be. It's easy to shoot with the lens 'wide open', but if you're taking a portrait, for example, you might not want just a tiny part of your subject in focus – you might want the subject's whole face to be sharply defined against a soft background. In this case, shooting at the widest aperture of your lens is not the answer and you'd want to stop down.

If you are shooting wide open, the next question is, 'Where should your point of focus be?' If you're shooting a field of flowers, for example, should you focus on the ones that are nearest the camera, the ones further away or somewhere in between? There's no definitive answer to this, and every focus point will produce a different feel to an image. If you have the opportunity, think about taking a number of shots focused at varying distances so you can decide which one works best when you review them on your computer.



DEPTH OF FIELD AND FOCAL LENGTH

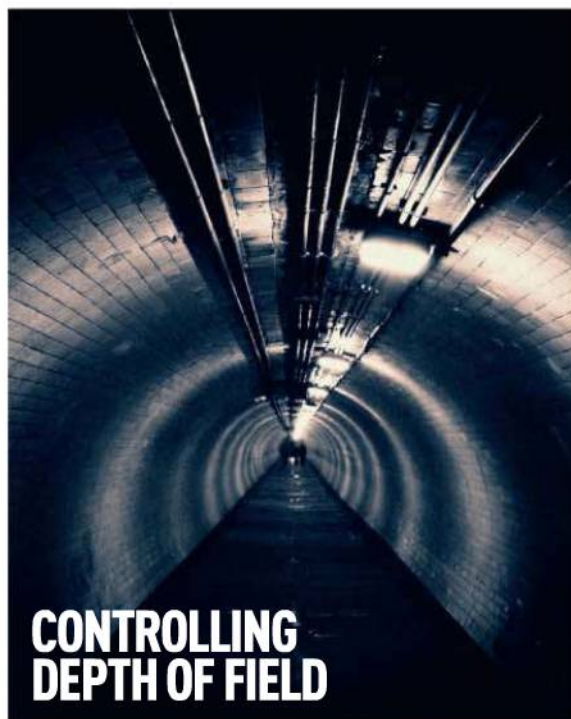
Although depth of field is primarily controlled by the aperture, the focal length also affects how much – or little – of the image appears sharp. Long lenses produce an apparently shallower depth of field than wideangle focal lengths.

DEPTH OF FIELD AND SUBJECT DISTANCE

As the camera-to-subject distance decreases, so does the depth of field, and you can use this to your advantage. Get close and shoot wide open with a telephoto lens for ultra-shallow focus.

BOKEH

Derived from the Japanese word for blur or haze (*boke*), bokeh is used to describe the out-of-focus areas in an image that appear when a lens is used at wide-aperture settings. Rectilinear lenses with a high number of aperture blades will produce smoother, rounder bokeh due to the near-circular aperture, while lenses with fewer aperture blades will produce polygonal bokeh. A lot of people spend far too long (usually on the internet) debating 'good' and 'bad' bokeh, but the simple fact is, bokeh is entirely lens-dependent and trying to measure it in any way is purely subjective.



CONTROLLING DEPTH OF FIELD

When it comes to using a shallow depth of field, there is a lot more to think about than simply setting the widest aperture on your lens. You also need to think about your choice of focal length and your distance from the subject. Moreover, stopping down from the maximum aperture – maybe by as little as 1 stop – can also help in terms of image quality, if optimum quality is your goal. Lenses are never delivering their best results at their widest aperture, and artefacts such as corner shading (vignetting) and lens-based chromatic aberration will only be exaggerated.

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Maximising depth of field

As an essential technique for landscape photographers, we show you how to guarantee that everything in your photographs is kept in focus

FOR landscape photographers, maximising depth of field can be a critical. That was certainly the case with Ansel Adams and the other members of Group f/64, who maintained that the only way to record the landscape in all its splendour was to ensure that everything remained sharply focused. The easiest way to maximise the depth of field in a shot is to use the smallest aperture setting on your lens. However, just as important is choosing the point on which to focus.

It's easy to assume a landscape's horizon is the point of focus, and so focus accordingly. However, in doing so, a lot of the depth of field is 'wasted'. This is because depth of field doesn't extend equally on either side of the point of focus; it extends one third of the distance towards the camera and two thirds away from it. So, to maximise the depth of field of a lens, at any aperture, you need to make sure you focus in the right place. This is the hyperfocal distance or hyperfocal focus point.

HYPERFOCAL FOCUS

When your lens is set to the hyperfocal distance, everything from infinity to half the hyperfocal distance will be recorded sharply.

For a landscape photograph, setting the hyperfocal point is simple if your lens has a distance scale with aperture and depth of field markings on it. Simply switch from auto to manual focus, and focus the lens so the 'infinity' focus marking aligns with the furthest point on the aperture/depth of field scale.

However, many modern lenses don't have a distance scale or, if they do, it's unlikely there will be aperture markings. This makes it a lot harder to set the hyperfocal distance, but not impossible. The first tool that will help you is your camera's depth-of-field preview button. This will physically close the aperture down to the setting you will be using to take the shot, and you can see the effect this has on the depth of field through the viewfinder. Although the viewfinder image will be dark, it should be clear enough to allow you to set your focus manually so that infinity is the furthest distance that appears sharp. This is unlikely to have you focusing at the precise hyperfocal distance, but it will ensure that the parts of the image you want to be in focus are sharp.

For greater precision, you can use an online depth-of-field calculator (such as www.dofmaster.com) to produce depth-of-



field charts for a range of focal lengths and focusing distances, along with the hyperfocal distance. Online calculators often take into account sensor size as well, which will affect depth of field. You might still struggle to focus on the precise hyperfocal point out in the field if your lens doesn't have particularly useful distance markings, but at least you will have a guide so you know roughly how far you should focus.

TILT-AND-SHIFT LENSES

Large-format cameras were (and still are) very popular with landscape photographers, not only because of the quality that can be achieved with sheet film, but also because of the movements that the bellows-camera design allows. The most significant of these is being able to tilt the lens forwards, so it isn't perpendicular to the film plane. In doing so, the depth of field can effectively be increased at any aperture setting.

This technique (known as the Scheimpflug principle, after Captain Theodor Scheimpflug) also applies with tilt-and-shift lenses, but an often-overlooked use of this is not to increase the maximum depth of field at any given aperture, but to

overcome the diffraction blur you get when you work with small apertures.

For example, a forward tilt could be used to increase the depth of field at an aperture of f/8, so it produces a similar depth of field to an aperture setting of f/16 on a fixed, non-tilting lens. In doing so, you're still achieving a similar depth of field, but without the diffraction blur of the smaller (f/16) aperture. This means the image will be marginally sharper. Not only that, but because you are shooting with an aperture that is 2 stops wider, you can use a shutter speed that is 2 stops faster, which could be useful for helping prevent blur through camera shake or subject movement.



MANUAL-FOCUS LENSES

These have a useful focus scale that makes it easy to maximise the depth of field in an image. Modern lenses tend only to tell you where you are focusing, without the depth of field information.



ABOVE
Old style
LEFT
New style



SMALL APERTURE DIFFRACTION

While a small aperture increases depth of field, there is a drawback: stopping down the lens to a smaller aperture increases diffraction, which softens the overall image. So, while you may get a greater depth of field with an aperture of $f/22$, you will get a slightly sharper image at $f/16$. How significant this is will depend on the lens you are using and the result you are after, but unfortunately it's something you have to accept. Sometimes a slightly sharper image with a shallower depth of field might be better than the maximum depth of field.

SMALL APERTURE STAR BURST

A side effect of using a small aperture is the creation of a 'star-burst' effect when there are point sources of light in an image. Reminiscent of the filters that were popular a number of years ago, the intensity of the star burst increases as the aperture gets smaller, with the number of points on the star equal to the number of blades in the lens aperture. It follows that using the smallest aperture on a lens with a high number of blades will produce the most intense star-burst effect.



PINHOLE

You won't get pin-sharp results (despite the name), but you can get a phenomenal depth of field with a pinhole lens. Whether you make it yourself, or buy a laser-cut 'hole', the typically wide viewing angle and tiny aperture (as small as $f/256$) can mean everything is equally focused – from a subject only inches from the lens all the way through to 'infinity'.



Focus stitching

IN MACRO or close-up photography, the depth of field can be incredibly narrow, even at the smallest aperture setting – and the closer you're focusing, the shallower it will be. This can't be overcome optically, but there is a digital method that can be used to increase the apparent depth of field.

Known as 'focus stacking', the technique involves taking a sequence of shots at slightly different focus points. These are combined so that only the sharply focused area in each image is used, creating the illusion of an increased depth of field. Here's how it's done in Photoshop CS4.

BEFORE

As a single shot, there's clearly not much depth of field in this Jurassic close-up, but this can be fixed through focus stacking.

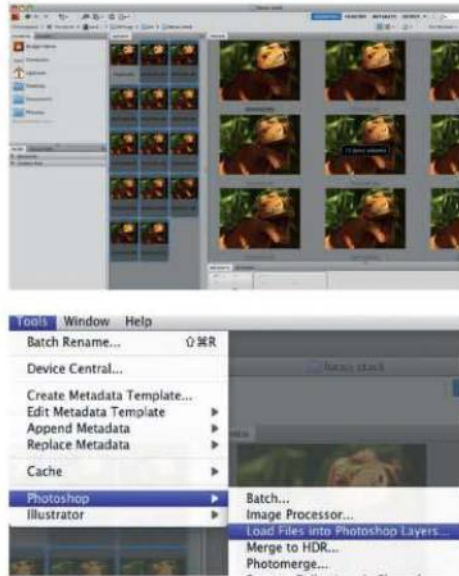
AFTER

Digitally stacking multiple images taken at different focus points extends the depth of field for full front-to-back sharpness

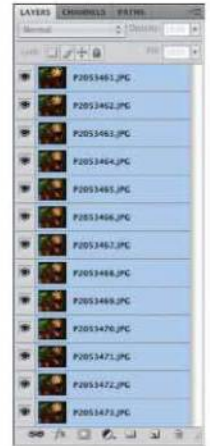
1 Focus stacking starts at the shooting stage, with a sequence of photographs taken at slightly different focus points. In total, 13 shots were used here. These two show the closest and furthest focus points covered by the sequence.



2 Once you have shot your images, the next step is to open them in Photoshop. I used Adobe Bridge to highlight the 13-shot sequence, then selected Tools>Photoshop>Load Files into Photoshop Layers... from the menu. This opens the individual files as layers in a single Photoshop image, ready to be combined.



3 In Photoshop, open the Layers palette and select all the layers by holding down the Shift key and clicking on the first and last layer in the Layers stack. With the layers selected, choose Edit>Auto-Align Layers... from the menu. Choose Auto from the Projection options in the next dialogue window, then click OK. Photoshop will now align each layer, and if you've got a lot of high-resolution images in your sequence this can take a while.



4 Once Photoshop has aligned the layers, it's time to blend them. With all the layers still selected, choose Edit>Auto-Blend Layers... from the top menu. Select Stack Images in the Auto-Blend dialogue and tick the Seamless Tones and Colors option at the bottom of the dialogue before clicking OK. Again, blending can take a while – longer than aligning – and with this 13-shot sequence the wait was a little over five minutes.



5 At this point, Photoshop has gone through each layer, decided which areas are the sharpest on each and created a mask that uses only the focused elements of each shot. Combined, this creates a much greater depth of field. At this stage, you can edit each individual mask if there are any untidy edges, and crop the image if it has slightly irregular edges due to the aligning and blending processes.



6 Once you've edited your masks, you can flatten your image and process it as usual – applying Levels or Curves adjustments, or converting to monochrome. Here, a simple crop to a square was the only additional editing required.



FOCUSING ACCURACY

The key to focus stacking relies on ensuring that every part of the image is sharply focused in at least one shot in the initial sequence. If not, you will get a 'soft spot'. Look closely at the final image (left), and you'll see a small patch behind the dinosaur's eye to illustrate this point.

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE

If you don't own Adobe Photoshop CS4, there are a number of alternative programs dedicated to focus stacking, such as Helicon Focus. To find out more, or to download the free 30-day trial, visit www.heliconsoft.com.

Long exposures

Whether you're extending your exposure in daylight, or working in low-light conditions, long exposures can transform the world around you



MOST of the time, avoiding long exposure times is something photographers strive for, if only to minimise the risk of camera shake. However, slow shutter speeds shouldn't just be considered an evil that needs to be prevented at all costs. In fact, long exposures should be celebrated as they allow you to explore often overlooked creative opportunities, whether it's intentionally dragging the exposure in daylight to inject a slow-moving or static subject with energy, or creating unique images in the darkness of night.

DAYLIGHT

Sometimes, a long exposure is unavoidable, but daylight isn't usually one of these occasions. However, this doesn't mean you can't deliberately slow things down and lengthen your exposures, and in doing so

start to make pictures that contain more than the visible scene in front of you.

The easiest way to achieve a long exposure in daylight is to set the camera to aperture-priority mode, and select the minimum aperture and lowest ISO setting. On a bright day, though, you may still find that the shutter speed you're getting just isn't particularly slow, and you'll also be stuck with your camera's smallest aperture value and maximum depth of field, which isn't particularly conducive to creativity.

To gain more control, the answer is to use neutral density (ND) filters. Essentially, an ND filter reduces the amount of light entering the camera without affecting the colour of the image. ND filters are available in a variety of strengths (usually measured in stops), and the stronger the filter, the more light it cuts out. However, the real magic



ND filters come in a range of strengths and can be combined to increase exposure times even more



For this shot, 1, 2 and 3-stop ND filters were combined to extend the exposure by a total of 6 stops. The result was a 45sec exposure duration

of ND filters comes from taking them to extremes and stacking them. Putting 1, 2 and 3-stop filters in front of your lens, for example, will give a total of 6 stops of light reduction; a 1/4sec daylight exposure could become a 16sec exposure, for example. When this happens, water can be transformed into a swirling mist and moving elements within a frame (such as people) can become so blurred they effectively 'disappear.' Moreover, as the filters are fitted to the lens, you can achieve all this using your camera's TTL metering as normal.

There are downsides to stacking filters, though, and this goes for all filters, not just ND. These can include possible vignetting with wideangle focal lengths where the edge of the front filter creeps into the corners of your shot, and/or quality issues due to the extra reflective surfaces you're putting in

'Essentially, an ND filter reduces the amount of light entering the camera without affecting the colour of the image'

front of your lens. If that's something you'd like to avoid, 'super-strength' ND filters, such as B+W's 10-stop ND, are available. Either way, the long exposures these filters can give in daylight conditions have the ability to imbue the world with an unfamiliar and eminently interesting appearance.



MOTION BLUR

An alternative technique to employ during long exposure times is to move your camera, either panning, rotating or intentionally shaking it to introduce deliberate camera movement. Depending on the movement of the camera, the result can range from vaguely recognisable images (the 'classic' being an upward panning motion while photographing trees), through to wholly unrecognisable subjects that rely on total abstraction and blurred colour to give the image its appeal.

ALTERNATIVE FILTERS

Although ND filters are obviously intended to extend exposures, there are alternatives that can be considered, such as infrared (IR) filters. Although infrared photography is often difficult on a digital SLR you can still take advantage of the long shutter speeds the IR filter provides, although most images work best if they are subsequently converted to monochrome.

The city at night

WHEN the ambient light level drops, a slow shutter speed is inevitable and many photographers will pack up for the day. But think of all the shots you could be missing! At night, towns and cities come to life as artificial lights switch on, and when these man-made light sources clash with the dark of night it creates a high-contrast world of intense colour that is just waiting to be photographed.

A QUESTION OF CONTRAST

Obviously, with such extremes of light and dark, contrast is one of the biggest challenges for nocturnal cityscapes, with both burnt-out highlights and blocked-up shadows the main concern. However, we accept that bright lights and deep shadows are featureless when we view them with our

naked eye, so don't assume you need to record every single tone. Think about the mood you want to create, as well as the detail, and use this when it comes to setting the exposure.

EXPOSURE

It doesn't really matter whether you opt to shoot in aperture-priority or shutter-priority mode, but you do need to decide which is more important: do you want to determine the depth of field using a particular aperture, or do you want to control movement using the shutter speed? Remember, your shutter speed is likely to be slow regardless of the aperture setting, but how slow will be up to you if you switch to shutter priority. Your choice of ISO is also important in low-

light conditions. Higher ISO settings will generally exhibit slightly lower contrast than low ISO settings, but while this can help in high-contrast situations, the downside is an increase in noise. Only you can decide which you prefer, but ISO 400 usually provides a good balance.

Although you can rely on your camera's meter to determine the starting exposure in these conditions, the potentially large areas of darkness punctuated by harsh lighting can readily fool it – most likely into underexposure if there are bright lights in the frame. Therefore, it's a good idea to take a test shot, review it using your camera's histogram, and then use exposure compensation to adjust the overall exposure.

NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY ESSENTIALS

TRIPOD: Shutter speeds can vary, but they're going to be slow enough to make a tripod essential

REMOTE RELEASE: You don't want to knock the camera while you trigger the shutter, so use a remote release. Alternatively, set your camera's self-timer to its maximum delay and use that to trip the shutter without touching the camera



Star trails

STAR-TRAIL photography is not about recording the skies above us with pinpricks of light from distant celestial bodies. Instead, it's about recording the movement of our planet as we spin through space – recording an event that we never really notice. However, you'll realise quickly that while it's capable of producing some unique images, star-trail photography is also a time-consuming exercise, so you'll most definitely be losing some sleep!

To take stunning star-trail photographs you need to move away from the light-polluted skies of towns and cities and set up in an area that provides you with nothing but darkness. You will also need a clear, cloudless night, and although recording the star trails is the main aim of the shot, the foreground is still important. Having a building, mountains or trees in the image will often produce a stronger result than white lines of stars arcing across a featureless sky.

In the northern hemisphere, the stars appear to rotate in the sky around a fixed point, close to the North Star (Polaris). Having this point in the frame will result in perfectly circular star trails

SETTING UP

Given that your exposure times will be measured in minutes or hours, a sturdy tripod is essential. Choose a wideangle focal length (an effective focal length of 20–28mm works well), focus manually at infinity and, as a starting point, set the ISO to 200 and the

aperture to f/4 (the wideangle focal length should provide the depth of field needed to cover the foreground subject and the stars).

EXPOSURE

With star trails, the exposure can be affected by many things that it's nothing more than a question of trial and error. For example, the brightness of the moon and distant light pollution will both affect the level of ambient light in the sky, and it's this background light that is the determining factor of star-trail exposures – the stars themselves will be white streaks in your images, regardless.

As a guide, make a trial exposure for 10mins, then take a second shot at 20mins. Keep doubling the exposure time until you get an acceptable result, using your camera's LCD screen as a guide. An exposure of around 30mins is about right when you've got a clear sky, minimal light pollution and a half moon, but as every shot will be taken in different conditions it's important to realise this isn't an exact science.

Once you've determined your basic exposure, you can then start to manipulate the length of your star trails by using the aperture. Closing the aperture down by 1 stop will double the exposure time. The rule is simple: the longer the exposure, the longer the star trails! Just don't expect to get it right first time out.



METERING

When you're metering for night shots, don't feel you have to go for an 'average' result. Why not use your camera's spotmeter to read the shadows and make that the basis for your exposure? Immediately, the darkest recesses of the scene will become clear, transforming night into day. It might not be the 'correct' way to do it, but sometimes the 'wrong' way can be just as effective – if not more so.



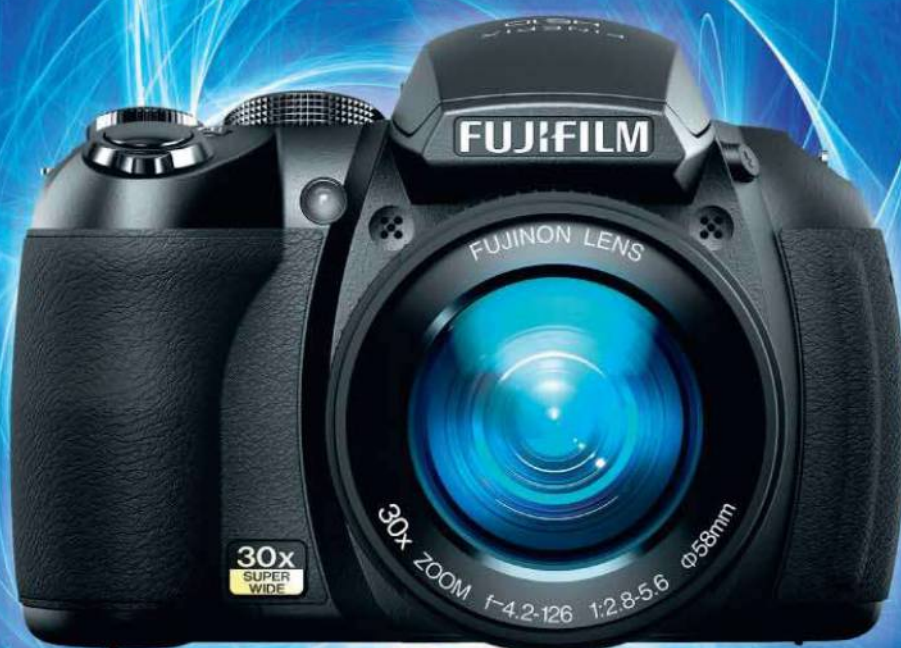
STAR TRAIL ESSENTIALS

TRIPOD Shutter speeds are measured in minutes or hours, so don't leave home without a sturdy support

TORCH A torch is indispensable if you want to see your camera settings in the dark!

SPARE BATTERIES The ultra-long exposure times will quickly drain your camera's battery, so carry a spare. Access to a power source that you can plug your camera into is also useful

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CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Although panning works for subjects moving across the frame, it's not practical if the subject is coming towards you. In fact, with an oncoming subject that will be growing in size as it approaches, there's nothing you can do other than select the fastest possible shutter speed and hope it's fast enough.

Short exposures

Some events happen faster than the human eye can see them, but as we reveal, this doesn't mean they can't be photographed

IN THEORY, split-second, moment-freezing exposure times should be short enough to record the fastest movement with maximum sharpness, but even if your camera allows you to shoot beyond 1/2000sec this still might not be fast enough, and it isn't always practical. To start with, you'll need light – and a lot of it. You can use the widest aperture setting on your lens and set a high ISO, but in doing so you are potentially resigning yourself to a high level of image noise, as well as a limited depth of field that makes focusing accurately even more critical – which is not easy if you're photographing a car travelling 200 miles per hour! However, you can get away with a smaller aperture and lower ISO – as well as a slightly slower shutter speed – through the use of a simple technique: panning.

PANNING

While you can pan your camera when it is on a tripod, handholding will give you

greater flexibility and control over the panning motion. To start with, your stance is important. So, taking a race track event as our example, stand square on to the track with your feet roughly shoulder-width apart. This will give you a stable base to shoot from.

Now, holding your camera to your eye, turn from the waist to face the direction from which your subject will be approaching. Hold your camera steady and track the subject through the viewfinder as it approaches, turning smoothly at your waist to follow it in the viewfinder. While tracking the subject, trigger the shutter and continue to follow the subject until the shutter closes. This will only be a fraction of a second, but it can be surprising how far a fast-moving subject can travel in that time. Combined with a relatively fast shutter speed (1/500sec or faster), and pre-focusing (see box right), the result should be a clean, crisp shot of a high-speed subject, perhaps with a touch of background blur to enhance the sense of speed.



PRE-FOCUS

No matter how sophisticated your camera's autofocus system is, some fast-moving subjects simply won't be picked up in time. You can help your camera by pre-focusing manually. Pick a point where you know the subject will be and focus the camera on that spot. Trigger the shutter a moment before your subject arrives and you'll find this is far more effective than trying to rely on your camera finding focus automatically.



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High-speed flash

THERE are some events that happen so quickly or spontaneously that a split-second camera-based exposure still isn't quick enough to record them. Harold Edgerton (see *Icons of Photography* in AP 3 January 2009) was a pioneer in high-speed flash photography, and is best known for his motion-freezing photographs of bullets and other seemingly 'impossible' moments. Edgerton realised that a high-speed flash could be used to make a shorter exposure than the mechanical (or electronic) shutter in a camera allowed and, more importantly, that it could be 'programmed' to fire at a precise moment.

High-speed flash techniques have grown in popularity in recent years, especially water-droplet shots, which can only be because digital cameras allow a much greater level of low-cost experimentation. The basic equipment requirements are minimal: a camera, a flash (ideally one you can use off-camera), a tripod and a bag full of patience are the key ingredients, and chances are you already have them all. If you do, here's what to do next.

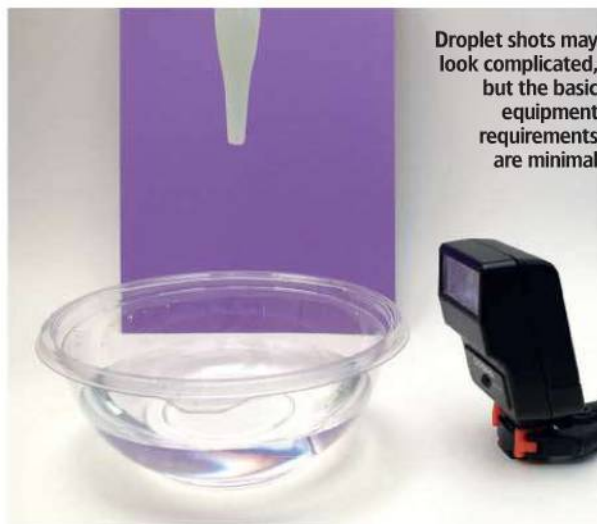
WATER DROPLETS

The first thing to understand about this technique is that the motion-stopping image isn't the result of an ultra-short shutter speed. Instead, the exposure is made by a momentary burst of flash. With this in mind, you don't want any ambient

'High-speed flash techniques have grown in popularity in recent years, especially water-droplet shots'



Timing is essential if you want to get perfectly positioned droplets



Droplet shots may look complicated, but the basic equipment requirements are minimal

light to affect the exposure, so work in a dimly lit room. It doesn't need to be blacked out, but you don't want it to be flooded with sunlight, either.

Start by setting up a bowl or dish of water on a table. This is where your droplets will be formed. Coloured or patterned card can be used in the background to colour your shots, so set that up as well, positioning it close to the back of the bowl.

Next, set up your camera on a tripod. You will need to fill the frame with a small area of the water in the bowl, which makes a macro lens or macro setting on a zoom lens ideal. If you don't own either, you can crop your shots later so just get as close as you can. Switch your camera to manual focus and hold a pencil, or something similar, just above the surface of the water in the centre of the bowl and use this to

focus on (it may help to have someone else hold the pencil while you focus).

Now for your flash. If you've only got a hotshoe-mounted flash, that's no problem – just slide it onto the hotshoe. You can even use your built-in flash if you want to. However, getting the flash off-camera will give you greater flexibility, and setting it to the side is a good starting position.

SETTING THE EXPOSURE

You're now ready to set your exposure, and the key criteria are a good depth of field, a low ISO for quality and a shutter speed that doesn't exceed your camera's flash sync speed (usually around 1/200sec).

Switch your camera to manual and set the aperture to f/16, the ISO to 100, and the shutter speed to its maximum sync speed (use 1/125sec if you aren't sure of this). Switch your flash on, make sure it's connected to your camera and take a test shot of the empty bowl of water. Use the histogram and LCD preview to assess the image, and if it's too dark move the flash closer to the bowl. If it's too bright, move the flash away or reduce its power using the flash itself or your camera's flash exposure compensation.

Fire another test shot and keep repeating the process until you're getting the right amount of flash for your exposure settings. If this proves impossible (which it can with some less powerful flash units), open up the aperture to f/11 or wider until you get a good exposure.



The moment an airgun pellet hit a raspberry frozen in liquid nitrogen could only be recorded using a flash trigger

SHOOTING

Now you're ready to shoot your water droplets. There are no rules, apart from shoot, shoot and shoot some more! Using some form of water dropper (such as a turkey baster), drop water into your container, aiming at the centre-spot on which you focused. As you do, take a shot. The moment the flash fires in relation to the position of the water drop will determine the result – whether it's a drop, a splash, a perfect Edgerton-style crown or, more likely, none of these. As I said at the start, getting a good shot takes a lot of patience.

FLASH TRIGGERS

The basic technique for photographing water droplets relies a lot on luck to get a good shot, and for every 100 shots you take you might only get one or two good ones at best. To remove some of the uncertainty from the process, and to explore other forms of high-speed flash photography, many photographers will buy or make a beam splitter to trigger the flash.

In its most basic form, a beam-splitter consists of two parts: an electronic 'sender' that sends out an invisible beam of light, and a 'detector', which detects it. When the beam is broken – by a falling drop of water, for example – the camera or flash is triggered. By fine-tuning the distance between the beam and the droplet's point of impact, it becomes possible to have a setup where nearly every shot is a success. Some photographers take this a step further by adding a delay unit to their setup for an even greater level of control.



Audio triggers can be used instead of beam splitters, to record moments where sound is a factor

Shooting smoke



DUE TO its ever-changing nature, smoke can produce some beautiful images, and with a little image-editing work you can easily end up with abstract photographs that are ideal for wall art. The setup is similar to water droplets, only you will need to use a black background instead of a coloured one, and something that will give off thick plumes of smoke (such as incense sticks or cones) instead of a water bowl.

EXPOSURE AND SHOOTING

As with water droplets, high-quality smoke pictures require a low ISO for quality (ISO 100–200), a medium-to-small aperture for depth of field ($f/8$ – $f/16$) and your camera's maximum flash sync speed (or $1/125$ sec if you aren't sure). These should all be set with the camera in its manual shooting mode.

With your camera set, it's time to dim the room, light up your smoke and start shooting. Take a few test shots to determine the correct exposure, using your camera's histogram as a guide. You don't want to overexpose the brightest parts of the smoke, but at the same time the smoke needs to

be bright enough to stand out from the black background. Use the flash-to-smoke distance to adjust the exposure, and once it's good you can start shooting for real.

Don't worry about looking through the viewfinder; your camera is set, so nothing's going to change. Instead, watch the smoke patterns and shoot when they're at their most interesting. If you want to change the shape of the smoke, gently blow from a distance.

Post-processing is almost as important as shooting, but it only takes four simple steps to perfect your pictures (see below left).

As well as applying flat colour, you can also apply gradients to your abstract smoke shots



1 Cropping. Pick the most interesting areas in a shot and don't be afraid to crop tightly to emphasise the best shapes.



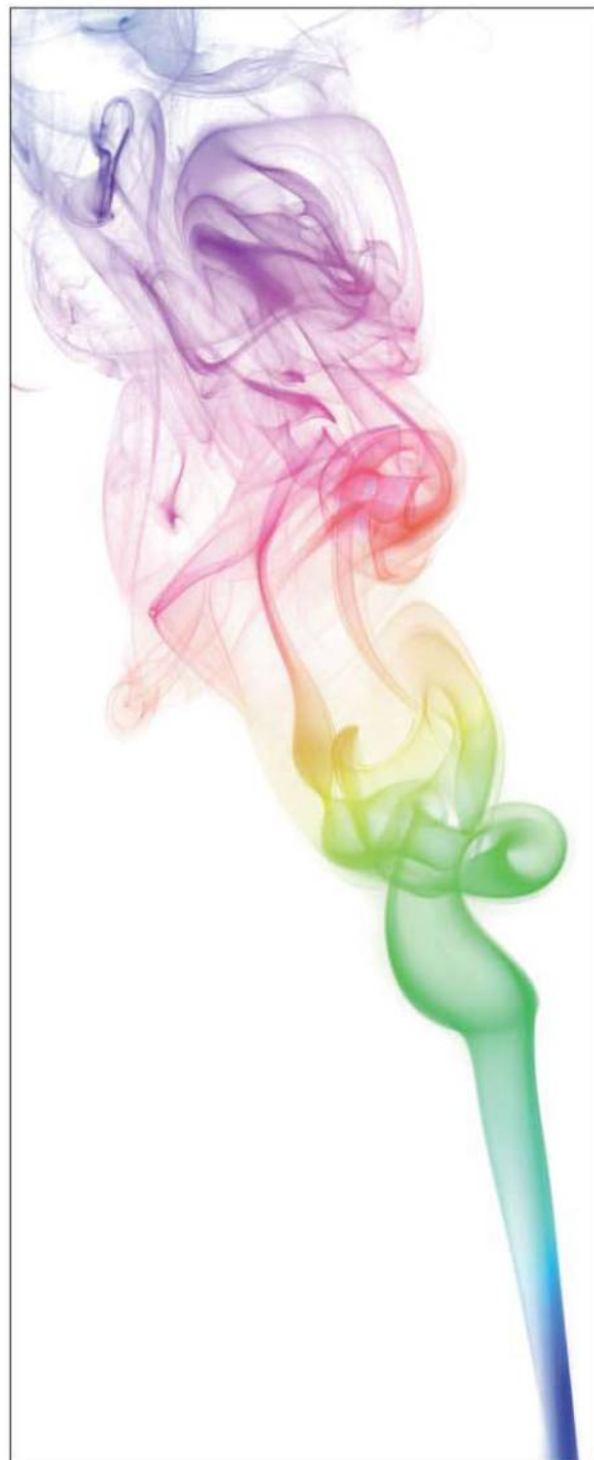
2 Levels. Use your image-editing program's Levels tool to ensure the background is pure black and bring out the contrast in the smoke. You can also use the Dodge and Burn tools to selectively lighten and darken parts of the image.



3 Invert. This is an optional step, but inverting the colours in the image is a simple way to create a white background.



4 Colour. Again, this is optional, but it will work for smoke that's against either a black or white background. You can use any of your editing program's colour adjustment tools, and because the background is pure black (or white if you inverted it), only the smoke will be affected.



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